
Including
AMIGA ACTION
Issue 107 ■ Christmas ■ 1996 ■ £4.50 Overseas price £4.50 Hfl 20
AMIGA
COMPUTING
3 Disk Christmas extravaganza
Christmas 1996
Requires any 1Mb Amiga
AMIGA COMPUTING
JETPilot
Take to the skies with this incredible flight sim from Vulcan
Disk 1
Ho ho ho
Christmas 1996
Requires WB2.04 Hard drive 4Mb RAM
AMIGA COMPUTING
DrawStudio Demo
From the creators of ImageStudio an awesome structured drawing program
*requires Magic User Interface
Disk 2
Christmas 1996
Requires WB2.04 Hard drive
AMIGA COMPUTING
Slipstream
An amazing demo of a stunning Wipeout clone
Plus...
akJFIF
AmigaLoad*
Clipper
ToolTypeEd
CopperDemon
CxBar*
PSXView
TruePub
CDB
Anim patch
*requires Magic User Interface
Disk 3
IDG MEDIA
9 770959 963084
13
Including: Worms, Director's Cut ● Draco Update ● Golden CD

Why Apple?

Apple Power PC Technology
Motorola RISC Processors
Over 1800 Mac software titles for PowerPC and thousands more to...
No.1 Macs use Internet Browser Standards like Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer
All Macs are Internet Ready
Macs cost far LESS than you think!!!
80% of all Colour Publishing is by Macintosh
65% of Post Production Video Editing is on Macs
All Macs have Networking built in
Mac is the World No1 for Multimedia
Mac users can play the TOP Games

One day we may see the rebirth of the Amiga with a PowerPC processor and other new features to enable it to compete again with today's systems. Sadly though, more than two years since Commodore's demise, very little of substance has happened. We've seen prototypes and promises, but that's about it...

Perhaps some can wait for the final outcome, but if you need more performance, without paying the earth - and you need it today - there's one real alternative to consider now...

Only Apple can offer you both desktop and portable computers that truly match the ease of use the Amiga brought to your desktop. Affordable Apple Macintosh systems have PowerPC RISC processors with thousands of off-the-shelf programs available in areas where the Amiga was previously so strong.

And, if you need to have the most compatible of all computers, Macintosh is currently the only system that can run MacOS, DOS and Windows applications via optional DOS Cards or SoftWindows.

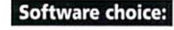
Why Macintosh?

Performance:

All Macs are PowerPC based (except PowerBook 190s). Even entry level systems run at 100MHz or 120MHz, with 200MHz powerhouses and 180 MHz multi-processor systems at the top of the range.

Apple is the only mainstream computer company who has been able to make the transition from the older CISC (complex instruction set computing) processors to the newer and faster RISC (reduced instruction set computing) processor technology - whilst still retaining full backward compatibility with previous software.

Remember 486, Pentium/Pro & 680X0 are merely CISC!



Software choice:



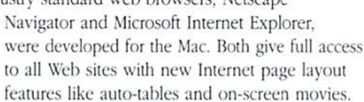
Over 1,800 native software packages (written specially for PowerPC Macs) have been shipped since Power Macintoshes were launched in 1994 - plus there are thousands of existing programs which can also be used. Industry standard programs such as Word, Pagestream, Word Perfect, Page FileMaker Pro, Excel, Quark Xpress, Photoshop and many others have all been developed for the Mac.

Creativity:

- Macintosh still dominates the creative world with an 80% market share in colour publishing.
- 65% of post-production video editing is on Macs.
- Macintosh is the most widely used system for the creation of Internet web pages.
- Most magazines (probably the one you're reading right now) are created on Macintosh.

The Internet & Communication:

- All Macs are Internet ready; many include a 28,800bps modem with full send/receive fax and answerphone management facilities.
- Industry standard web browsers, Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer, were developed for the Mac. Both give full access to all Web sites with new Internet page layout features like auto-tables and on-screen movies.



- The Internet's standard format for video files, called QuickTime (or QuickTime for Windows), was an Apple development. Of course it comes as standard with every Mac.

Connectivity & Expandability:

- All Macintoshes have networking built in as standard, so connecting systems together and adding shared printers etc. couldn't be easier.
- All Macintoshes have an external SCSI connector as standard (except Duos) - adding external drives, cartridge drives, scanners etc. really is Plug-and-Play.
- Low-cost digital cameras can be plugged into the Mac for instant real image input.
- Inexpensive industry standard PCI cards can be used in all Mac systems from the 5400 upwards.

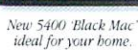
Education & Edutainment:

- Many quality Macintosh titles are widely available. Dorling Kindersley offer superb titles like The Ultimate Human Body and History of the World whilst Microsoft publish Encarta, Cinemania and Dinosaurs.
- Because Macintosh is the preferred system within many educational establishments, high quality software is assured.

Multimedia:

- Apple is the World's No. 1 Multimedia PC vendor.
- All desktop Macs have a fast CD-ROM drive as standard (portables get internal CD soon too).
- In 1995, 42 of the top 50 selling CD-ROM titles worldwide were developed on the Macintosh.
- Many Macintoshes have built-in TV with teletext so TV clips can be recorded directly to disk as QuickTime movies.
- Many Macintoshes have built-in video in and out, for direct recording to VCRs.
- Some Macintoshes have internal digital video editing facilities as standard, others can be upgraded to include this facility with ease.

New 5400 'Black Mac' ideal for your home.



Recreation & Games:

- Top games like The Ultimate Doom, Myst, Rebel Assault II, Dark Forces, Descent, Afterlife, Lost Eden, Legend of Kyrandia, Full Throttle and The Dig have all been developed for Macintosh.

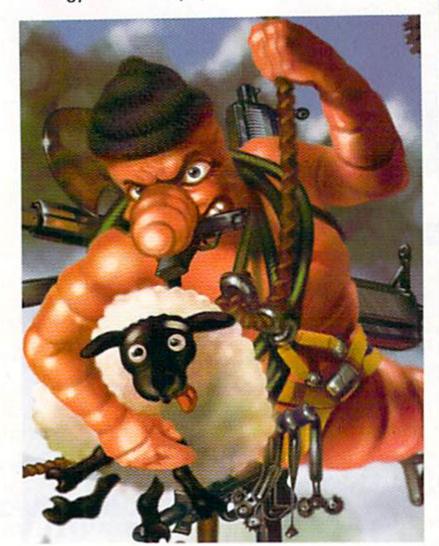
Output & Presentation:

- Connecting and using colour printers (from Epson, HP, Apple and others) to Macs is so easy and the results are truly outstanding.
- Many software packages are available offering image manipulation and superb photo quality output.



Contents

SYSTEM



REVIEWS





FEATURES

THE COVERDISKS

JET PILOT

Vulcan's flight sim - a must for thrill-seekers everywhere





DRAWSTUDIO

Try your hand at this demo of LH Publishing's structured drawing program

COVER STORY



REGULARS



AMIGA GUIDE

"World of A1200" & "Top 100 Games" CDs FREE with every CD ROM drive!!!

EXTERNAL SCSI HARD DRIVES

Top quality drives in a top quality metal enclosure with cooling fan, in built power supply and SCSI ID selector.

540MB SCSI HARD DRIVE £234.99

1GIG SCSI HARD DRIVE £314.99

2GIG SCSI HARD DRIVE £399.99

(deduct £50.00 for uncased drive)

DATAFLYER SCSI+

Now includes CD ROM drivers and instructions.

The Dataflyer is a 16 bit SCSI II controller card that converts the signals on the internal IDE interface to also run SCSI devices at the same time as the IDE hard drive. The Dataflyer SCSI+ will operate up to 5 SCSI devices such as CD-ROMS, hard drives, Syquest removable drives, tape back up drives etc. Unlike other SCSI interfaces, the Dataflyer SCSI+ is compatible with all known accelerators etc and it does not stop you from utilising any of the important expansion ports on your A1200/A600.

The Dataflyer SCSI+ easily installs into the A1200/A600 (simply pushes in, no need to remove the metal shield) and provides a 25 way D connector through the blanking plate at the back of the A1200. *Full instructions and software supplied.*

DATAFLYER ONLY £79.99 or £49.99 when purchsed with a SCSI device

SQUIRREL ONLY £49.99 or £39.99 when purchsed with a SCSI device

SURF SQUIRREL £89.99 or £64.99 when purchsed with a SCSI device

MEMORY EXPANSIONS

A1200 trapdoor fitting memory expansions feature a battery backed clock and a socket for an accelerator FPU.

NEARLY DOUBLES THE SPEED OF THE A1200

STAR VALUE

4MB MEMORY EXPANSION £74.99

8MB MEMORY EXPANSION £94.99

33MHZ 68882 FPU (PLCC) £29.99 or only £24.99 when purchased with above

MODEMS

Our highly rated, top quality feature packed modems are ideal for Amiga users. All modems include our FREE MODEM ACCESSORIES PACK (worth £19.99) which includes a cable to connect the modem to the Amiga, NCOMM comms software, Amiga Guide to Comms and a list of Bulletin Boards from which you will be able to download vast amounts of free software as well as have access to E-MAIL facilities.

- MNP 2-4 Error Correction
- MNP 5 Data Compression
- Fax Class I and II compatible, Group 3
- Hayes Compatible
- Full 80 page manual
- 12 Months guarantee

14400 MODEM £69.99

28800 MODEM £109.99

NET AND WEB SOFTWARE £34.99

STAR VALUE

DISCOLOGY

Discology is the ultimate in disk copying power for the Amiga. The package comprises the Discology Disk, manual and Discology cartridge for making copies of heavily protected programs with an external disk drive. Discology will also format disks, check disks for errors etc.

ANTIVIRUS

Anti Virus Professional is the most powerful tool for detecting and removing viruses. Anti Virus pro will check and device hard drives, floppy disks and even CD ROM drives for viruses. Very straight forward to use, includes a full 50 page manual.

ORDER NOW BEFORE A VIRUS DESTROYS YOUR SYSTEM !!!

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WORLD OF A1200 CD and TOP 100 A1200 GAMES CD £7.49 EACH *or FREE with every CD ROM drive!!!*



Freephone 0500 340548 to place your order

amiga comment

Cybercafes: Old H@t?

Hugh Poynton discusses whether Cybercafes are a unique new culinary communications concept or the haunt of those who'd prefer to hammer away at a keyboard in tragic solitude

The phenomenon of the Cybercafe is unique and unprecedented. Why is it that cafes built around the premise of computers have arisen? You'd scoff at any other communications based eatery - a telephone cafe, or a fax'n'food joint for example, would be about as marketable as a good marriage guide by O.J.Simpson.

When it comes down to it, the computer and the Internet possess one basic feature that allow them to be a valid and useful addition to a social establishment. Via computers and the net, communication isn't limited to a one-on-one debate and discussion can be held via the Web. This is the only way cybercafes can make themselves work on anything other than mere novelty value - by recognising this unique facet of the Net.

Look for example at the best Cybercafes; The Vibe Bar in London has designed its cafe so that the computers are used for sociable, not solitary purposes. The computer terminals are arranged so there is a computer terminal to every sofa rather than chair - even this basic change means maybe three people can have an IRC conversation with somebody rather than just the one.

On this level, a normally fairly dull activity is turned into something much more sociable and fun. On a more fundamental level, the bar uses its computers to stage live debates. An author for instance, might pose a contentious question, the bar would be linked to other cafes and bars and a real-time debate involving hundreds of people could be staged.

Questions e-mailed days before could be read out and answered. This is the Cybercafe ideal. A place much like the old coffee shops of centuries ago where topical issues were discussed. Obsolete, also in London, lives up to this ideal too; artists can display their work on the net and get feedback from across the UK.

The main problem is there are too many lazy Cybercafe owners. To me, the prospect of going into a cafe and hammering away at the keyboard is about as interesting and appealing as watching a 2000 metre slug race. The very reason for cafes and bars is so that you can enjoy real life, genuine, face to face social interaction with somebody else - you can have a chat and a laugh. This is not the same as typing garbage to somebody on an IRC line. You can't see them laugh, frown, grin or shrug. The whole experience is neither fulfilling nor satisfying.

Perhaps its just me, but I don't want to go to a bar or a cafe where you spend your time typing away exactly like you did at work or banging away on computer games like you are in some arcade. The only way a Cybercafe can work is if they use the technology to add to the sociability of the place, not detract from it. A computer at a cafe table or in a bar could be brilliant, if there's a group of you debating a subject, you have the means right in front of you to investigate the matter further and make your discussion more informed.

Cybercafes have to re-organise themselves, in the way they are laid out and the events that go on, or face the fact that they may just be some trendy, Gibsonesque fad that will be ridiculed by those discussing the subject in the bars and cafes of the future.

The AC team

EDITOR	Tina Hackett
ART EDITORS	Graham Parry Jim Eagers, Tym Leckey
DEPUTY EDITOR	Neil Mohr
PRODUCTION EDITORS	Justine Bowden, Alan McLachlan
P45 GUY	Andrew Maddock
STAFF WRITER	Hugh Poynton
REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS	Dave Cusick Katherine Nelson Paul Overaa Phil South
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR	Gareth Lofthouse
ADVERTISING MANAGER	Lisa Bracewell
AD SALES	Sue Horsefield
AD PRODUCTION	Barbara Newall
MARKETING MANAGER	Steve Tagger
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Alan Capper
DATABASE MANAGER	Victoria Quinn Harkin
	List Rental Enquiries 0171 831 9252

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR	David Wren
MANAGING DIRECTOR	Ian Bloomfield
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Tel: 01625 878888, Fax: 01625 850652

EMail contacts:
Editorial edit@acomp.demon.co.uk
Advertising ads@acomp.demon.co.uk

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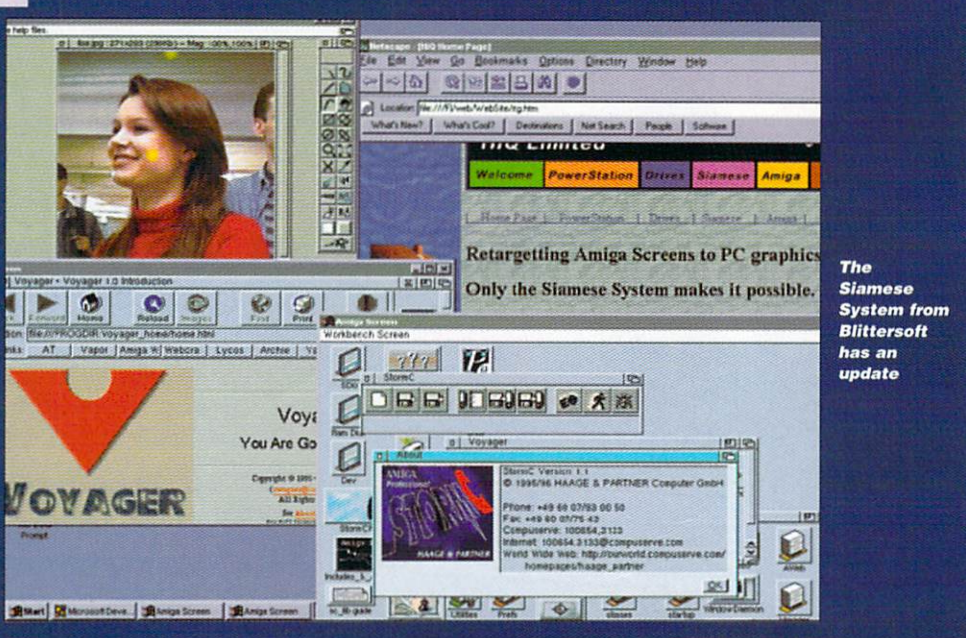
For eight years Amiga Computing has been the leading magazine for Amiga enthusiasts. Amiga Computing promises to inform, educate and entertain its readers each month with the most dedicated coverage of the Amiga available



By Tina Hackett



INNOVATIVE SYSTEMS



The Siamese System from Blittersoft has an update

The revolutionary Siamese system from HiQ that allows an Amiga and PC to share hard drives over a SCSI network, is about to get an update. If you have a PC and Amiga Siamese System this new development will allow you to see an Amiga screen on a Windows 95 window on a PC therefore you will be able to run programs like Photogenics through Windows. Contact Blittersoft for more details.

NEW NETCOM CHARGES

Netcom UK, one of the leading Internet Service Providers announced a change in its billing structure. Customers registering after the October 1 will be charged £14.95 per month including VAT. Existing Netcom UK customers will be charged the new price from November 1.

Netcom believes that the new VAT inclusive price structure will be easier for both them and their customers. David Furniss, Netcom UK's sales and marketing director said Netcom was, "One of the very first Internet Service Providers to recognise customer's needs for VAT inclusive pricing" and the new pricing structure would set an example that competitors will sooner or later have to follow.

BAN ON VIOLENT GAME

A Public Domain title has caused outrage recently when it was discovered by a member of the public in a UK PD library. Called Schoolyard Slaughter, the aim of it is to shoot children in the head whilst they are walking across a playground. In the light of Dunblane, the game caused disgust and immediately Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, joined protests to ban the game.

The Public Domain company which originally held the game (that came in from America) has destroyed the original disk. However it is thought copies could still be circulating. The title had found its way into Britain before Dunblane - even so, the question of morality over such a concept for a game raises extreme concerns about what people consider acceptable entertainment.

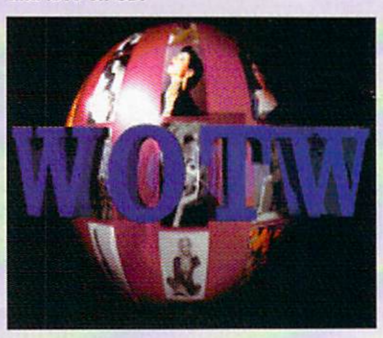
Distributing such a game is a criminal offence as it has not been classified by the BBFC and carries a prison sentence of two years and/or an unlimited fine.

TOYS FOR THE BOYS

Sadeness have two new CD's available and you can grab yourself £5 off if you pre-order. One is called Women Of The Web and, you guessed it, features lots of women from pictures to movie clips and err, sound samples. Included are supermodels, TV presenters and film stars.

The other is CD 'X' which covers subjects as diverse as Aliens to famous murderers. So for those who are into the weird and wonderful this CD will give you the low down on everything from crop circles to conspiracies. Sadeness reckon that they have used over 600Mb and virtually filled the CD. It will retail at around £29.95. Phone 01263 722169 for more details.

Women On The Web has all the women you know and love on CD!



CLIP ART COLLECTION

SoftWood has released an EPS Clip Art Sample Collection. This sampler volume contains 91 quality EPS images for desktop publishing. The images range from business and education to pictures of birds, fish and insects.

The Clip Art Sample Collection is available on 4 low density disks for £29.95. Purchasing the Sampler Collection automatically reduces the cost of the additional volumes from the £64.95 recommended retail price to £34.95. For further details contact Gordon Harwood Computers Ltd, on 01773 836781.

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

The Omnilink Corporation is set to launch its AQCVid hardware/software interface for the Connectix Corporation's Quickcam digital camera. The AQCVid allows the PC version of the Quickcam camera to be connected to any Amiga and includes CyberGraphX support. File formats include IFF, ANIM5 and ANIM7.CDXL (for animation and sound). JPEG is planned for future releases.

The interface will enable users to transfer photographs to their computers for use in desktop publishing, Internet homepages, image processing and even games.

The AQCVid will be released in America in November 1996 at $59.95. Please note this does not include the QuickCam camera.



Amiga users can now take advantage of the Quickcam with the new AQCVid

EPSON INKJET LAUNCH

Thursday October 3 saw the launch of Epson's new, low cost 720 dpi Inkjet, the Stylus 200. Priced at £136, including VAT, the printer is one of the most affordable 720 dpi printers available.

The Epson Stylus 200 includes a number of new, innovative features. The 'Auto-Grey' function for example, scans the page to be printed and selects the best settings for each text, graphic or image. This ensures the overall print quality is as good as possible. A further feature is an ink status monitor that ensures the printer doesn't run out of ink half way through a print job.

For details phone 01442 61144

CYBERSPACE ON SATELLITE

Sci-Fi Channel, the satellite and cable channel dedicated to producing and screening programmes about all aspects of science fact and fiction, are to launch three new series concerning the world of computer technology.

'The New Edge' looks at the technological, scientific, medical and transport innovations of today and investigates the possibilities and potential of these new scientific breakthroughs. 'C/Net' looks at the latest news from the world of computers and 'The Web' addresses new developments on the World Wide Web.

The three series will be screened every Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday on cable and satellite.

HIGHWAY DOWN-UNDER

Tailor Made Travel, a Midlands based travel agents, has established a new Web site to help its clients research and plan their holidays in Australia and New Zealand. The site contains information about holiday destinations, quotes for specific holidays and cost saving benefits on flights.

Using the Web site, Tailor Made Travel can draw up a holiday schedule that meets the exact requirements of the traveller. If the down-under Web site proves successful, Tailor Made Travel hopes to expand its use of the Internet to cover holiday destinations in the UK and Europe. The Web site can be found at: http://www.taylor-mae.co.uk

ON-LINE 96

On-line Information 1996, the worlds premier IT media industry event, will be held from 3-5 December at Olympia 2 in London. The conference and exhibition for electronically available media will cover themes such as, 'Information as a Strategic Resource', 'Consumer On-line Services', 'Digital Publishing', 'Next Generation Search Software' and 'Real Time Data', as well as Internet related topics including 'Using the Internet as an Information Source' and 'Cashing in on the Net'.

A new feature of the exhibition will be NetCity, a whole floor of the Olympia complex devoted to the Internet. The On-line Information 1995 exhibition featured 347 exhibitors, 16,870 attendees and over 958 delegates. 85% of the conference delegates were from overseas.

CYBER SOLICITORS

The Computer Law Group of Clark Holt, Commercial Solicitors, has published a series of legal guides to various topics in computer law. The three free brochures cover areas such as the legal aspects of the millennium bug, service level agreements and the Internet.

Clark Holt Commercial Solicitors are included in the most recent 'Legal 500' and its Computer Law Group are highly respected in the Legal profession. To obtain a free brochure contact Jeremy Holt at his e-mail address, JeremyH@CLARKHOLT.CO.UK or on 01793 617444.

VIRTUAL MOTORS

October 15 sees the launch of an innovative new Web site that aims to change forever the way people shop for new and used cars. The Virtual Showroom will be the UK's first interactive virtual car purchasing system and intends to make buying a new car easier and less time consuming.

The site uses state-of-the-art Internet technology to link the prospective buyer to car dealerships across the country. Users will have access to photo illustrated lists of the stock in each dealership and can search for cars by mileage, make, model and value.

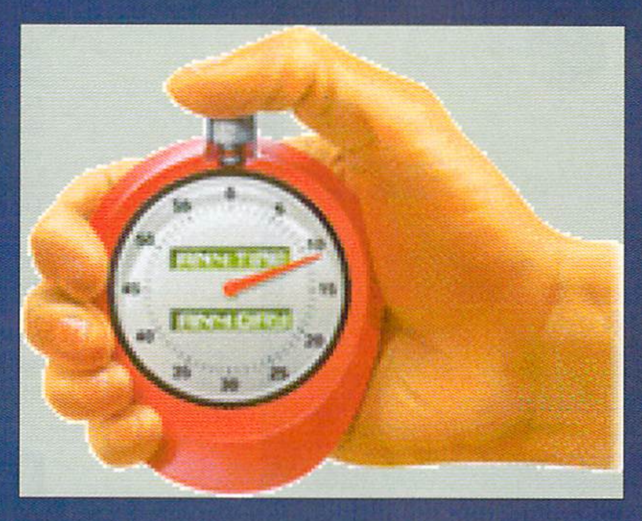
A list of cars that fit the requirements of the purchaser will be displayed and by clicking on any of the vehicles on the list, the user will be able to view all the relevant information on that particular car. Prospective buyers can also obtain details of finance options from the different dealers and find out the part exchange value of their vehicles using data from Glasses Information Services.

The system will enable buyers to shop around and establish what car they can afford before actually visiting any showrooms. As Virtual Showrooms general manager said, 'The process of buying a car will always involve a test-drive, but this system takes the consumer as close as possible to actually buying a car on-line. See the site at: http://www.virtual-showroom.co.uk/

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Exponential Technology has announced that it has developed the world's fastest PC microprocessor. The Exponential X704 has a core clock speed of 533MHz and is designed for high-end PowerPC-compatible systems. This has repercussions for the future of the Amiga, if an Amiga Compatible PowerPC is made it could use this processor and there could be an Amiga to rival all the DEC Alpha workstations.

NETCOM ANNOUNCES AMIGA SOLUTION



Netcom has announced that it is supporting the Amiga with a complete Internet software and service package. As the world's largest independent ISP, it is one of the few big organisations to target Amiga owners directly.

Dave Furniss for Netcom commented, "The UK Amiga community is very keen to have access to the Internet and we are one of the few ISP's to recognise this. With NETCOMplete for Amiga we will offer a comprehensive, easy-to-install software package. Plus the top level, award-winning service already on offer to our existing PC customers: round-the-clock customer support, fast, problem-free access and competitive pricing."

NETCOMplete will support WWW, FTP, IRC, E-mail, news, telnet and finger and can be installed with one easy package. Based on version 4.0 AmiTCP, it is available free either through Netcom (01344 595600) or through the authorised distributor, Eyetech.

Existing Internet users can download NETCOMplete from Netcom's FTP server. Amiga customers will be charged the same as existing Netcom customers which is £5.95 (inc VAT) for the first month and £14.95 per month from then on which gives you unlimited Internet access.

What will make this particularly appealing is that Netcom are also offering a technical hotline for Amiga customers which will operate 24 hours, 7 days a week as well as full user documentation.



SPEED UP

UK modem manufactures, US Robotics is aiming to capture the desktop ISDN market with the launch of its combined ISDN terminal adapter and V.34+ modem. This modem gives businesses the choice of analogue or digital communications in a single unit. The Courier I modem allows a maximum analogue connection rate of 33.6 Kbps which enables it access to analogue resources such as Internet service providers, on-line services and fax machines. However for LAN access, large scale file transfer and transaction processing the Courier I uses a digital ISDN, 64 Kbps connection. The Courier also has the ability to automatically detect whether a call is analogue or digital.

This, so Product Marketing Manager Matt Hopgood states, '"Recognises the hybrid nature of PC communications in the UK and offers future proof connectivity over both analogue and Digital links." The Courier I modem will be priced at £399, including VAT and the modem will carry a five year warranty. For further details contact US Robotics Ltd on 01734 228200.

COMPUTACENTER'S HACKER SURVEY YIELDS RESULT

The results of Computacenter's latest survey on hackers and computer security were announced earlier this month, revealing fascinating insights into the views and opinions of 136 hackers across the country.

The survey shows that 79 per cent of the hacking community believe legislation will not prevent the bulk of them hacking. 62 per cent wouldn't be dissuaded by a significant increase in arrests of hackers and well over three quarters of hackers believe that most companies have insufficient safeguards.

The hacker's general opinion was that systems administrators were failing to build secure systems and safeguards were sadly lacking. Common criticisms included bad system design, using default settings, out of date security systems and lack of encryption and firewalls. Surprisingly, 72 per cent of hackers cited easy passwords as being the easiest way to gain unauthorised access to computer systems.

The Internet, so the survey suggests, is providing hackers with more opportunity to break into computer systems and specialised hacking software is even available over the Internet. However, Computacenter hopes that as a result of the survey, companies will be able to deter hackers and make their systems more secure.

UPGRADE BARGAINS

Blittersoft has announced that it has slashed the price of the PHASE 5 range of accelerators and peripherals. For example, it has a Cyberstorm MKII 060/50 at £599.95 and the Blizzard 1260 Turbo 060/50 at £499.95. Phone them on 01908 261466 for more details. So if you're thinking of upgrading, there has never been a better time.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS THE HIGHEST RATED GAME OF 1996. It's simply the most playable, polished game this year. It is one of the best Amiga games of all time. **AMIGA FORMAT: GRAPHICS 10/10** - Superb. Some of the best you're likely to see in an Amiga game. **AMIGA COMPUTING: GRAPHICS 96%** **AMIGA FORMAT:** Not only the best beat-em-ups for a long time, it's one of the best games we've seen for a while. You really want to be playing when you know you're going to be fighting other human beings but even in one player mode you're going to have... **AMIGA COMPUTING: OVERALL 95%** **CU AMIGA:** "It has the best sound effects and music in the history of beat-em-ups. Stunning lighting effects and backgrounds. Some of the best the Amiga has ever seen." **AMIGA COMPUTING:** "Capital Punishment could take fighting games into the next millenium." Final word: "When you buy Capital Punishment you will never ever need to purchase another fighting game. It contains everything and more and wipes the floor with the likes of Body Blows, Shadow Fighter and Mortal Kombat. Buy it now." **AMIGA GAMES** (Germany): "The best Amiga fighting game ever!" Capital Punishment is the most technically advanced and most playable combat game on Amiga. **AMIGA COMPUTING:** "The graphics and in particular the shadows is Capital Punishment's best feature. The game iseIf is packed full of playability and presents enough challenge for expert gamesplayers. The graphics and presentation are outstanding." A specially developed state-of-the-art bob routine with a real-time horizontal bob flip that can animate two large characters covering a combined area of over 30,000 pixels, at a rate of 25 frames per second. **AMIGA FORMAT: ADDICT... /10** - "This one keeps you fighting. Once you work out a new set of moves it's difficult not to try 'em." **AMAZING COMPUTING:** "Do you want to see how beautiful AGA graphics can be? You'll be proud to call your Amiga a ... Once you see it, you will love it." **CU AMIGA: SOUND 96%** **AMIGA FORMAT:** "ClickBOOM have certain... with this game and it shows. Not only are the graphics excellent but there's depth to the gameplay. Experience, ... tactics all play a part which is just how things should be in games like this. It's certainly the most polished and play... this particular genre." **AMIGA GAMES AWARD** **CU AMIGA:** "Amazing animation speed. Speed, speed - eat yo... rt out Super Street Fighter 2." **Technical requirements**: AGA Amiga (1200 / 4000 / CD32 with hard drive). Hard-... s nec... About 15Mb of free space needed. FAST RAM is not necessary (but recommended). **AMIGA COMPUTIN...** ...e ... els are graphically outstanding, with either fog, mist, or thunder and lighting effects. The work that has gone into the g...ics is certainly committed, and this is partly what makes Capital Punishment a great game. It has been developed by a team who are greatly devoted to the Amiga. **AMIGA JOKER MEGA HIT** **AMIGA COMPUTING** (Greece): "Amazing stereo sound, unbelievable, realistic effects...the game becomes lifelike. Capital Punishment will for sure be one of the biggest successes of this year." **AMIGA FORMAT GOLD** **AMIGA ACTION:** "Capital Punishment is one of the finest games on Amiga." **AMIGA FORMAT: PLAYABILITY 9/10** - "All the essential ingredients for a descent beat-em-up in that you can learn to do better, effort is rewarded and skill plays a big part." Additional visual effects: fog, light diminishing, morphing, slow-motion replay; realistic blood animation; red screen flash after every blow; screen shakes after a player is punched or falls; screen scroll with every move. A unique zone editor that has been created to maximize the combat experience through an advanced collision detection system using four collision zones (head, body, legs, and attack) for every character in every frame. **AMIGA COMPUTING:** Fans of Body Blows and Mortal Kombat cannot fail to be impressed with Capital Punishment's overall quality. **AMIGA GAMES** (Germany) **Overall 94%** **AMIGA FORMAT:** "It all looks gorgeous. Light tricks make it look even more gorgeous. ClickBOOM have done wonders with Capital Punishment in the graphics dept. The sprites are excellent, the backgrounds are excellent and generally everything looks terrific. What you can't see from the screenshots is the smoothness of the animation or the little graphic tricks that have been included. All the characters move extremely fluidly. All the moves are executed quickly, smoothly and believably. The graphics trickery is a joy as well. Swinging and swaying shadows, dark rooms which only become lit when the lightning outside flashes and eerie cut-scenes all go tog... make ... of the ... atmospheric beat-e... you could ... o see." ... you still reading this ad? ... st be ... tereste... the game... ? Well, ... buy it. N... **AMI...** ...**G:** One of the best games ... ti... on C... unishme... emi-tr... ent 3D s... that casts itself o... characters and the floors b... ne cha... movements ... rate ... frames p... nd. **AMIGA ...N: OVERALL 95%** **AMIGA ...** "It's this ... of thing - bein... to fo... gue and s... at sets Cap... ment apart from the ordinary a... ates it to ... at Gold. Knoc... pon... o the dec... you can stil... ge into them while they're on the floo... continue k... nd punchin... Grec... In two pl... ode (or three or four if you fancy, be... there are l... and tourna... ound w... un. Take the ... limit off and you ... out for as lo... can stand ... g up." **CU A... SUPERSTAR** **AMIGA JOKER** (Germany): "A clean technic... ockOut!" **AMIGA FO... GOLD** **AMIGA CO...UTING: OVERALL 95%** **AMIGA SUPERSTAR** **CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS THE HIGHEST RATED GAME OF 1996** **AMIGA ...** **...PHICS 10/10** **AMIGA ACTION: OVERALL 95%** **AMIGA COMPUTING:** Final word: ... ll never ever need to purchase another fighting game. It contains everything and more and wipes the f... Body Blows, Shadow Fighter and Mortal Kombat. Buy it now." ... out the cool ... **AMIGA FORMAT:** "ClickBOOM have certain... with this game ... but there's depth to the gameplay. Experience, skill ... tactics all play a pa... ...games like this. It's certainly the most polished and playable in this particular genre." **CU AMIGA...**

Future of Imagine



by **Katherine Nelson**

Michael C. Halvorson, President of Impulse, Inc., announced future support of the Amiga version of Imagine is in question. Currently, the company is devoting most, if not all, of its time and resources into development of Imagine for Windows-based machines.

This is in part due to questions about the long-term destiny of the Amiga computer. However, if enough demand is demonstrated for improvement and support of the Amiga version, Mr. Halvoson has stated he will attempt to fulfill that desire. To keep Amiga Imagine on the market, user input is required.

In order to test the demand for the Amiga version of Imagine, Mr. Halvorson has asked Intellipoint Corporation to begin a study of the Amiga market. The results of the survey will be the basis for a decision as to whether to continue support of the Amiga computer.

All registered users of Amiga Imagine will be asked to participate in a survey which will ask questions on the subjects of upgrade desires, wish lists and the current uses for Amiga Imagine. Unregistered users may also participate by e-mail to Michael Nixon, who is in charge of the survey and also a user of the product. Contact information for Mr. Nixon appears below.

Boston Computer Society

After several years of decreasing membership, the board of directors of the Boston Computer Society voted to declare bankruptcy. The group was based in New England, but had worldwide membership.

The Amiga subgroup of the Boston Computer Society, the Amiga User Group, is planning to continue its meetings as a separate entity. It may form a new parent organisation with other groups that once belonged to the Boston Computer Society, but so far, no plans are definite.

For now, the general meetings will be at 7:30pm at MIT on the fourth Tuesday of the month, as they had been in the past. The Technical and Video subgroups of the Amiga User Group will also continue. They may, however, be forced to find a new location for their meetings.

The group's bulletin board system is still Amiga-based and remains functional, though the e-mail and internet ability is temporarily gone.

Show Offs

Wonder Computers International Inc. will be hosting the 1996 World of Amiga Show in Toronto this December 13-15. The show will be Amiga-only.

Times for the show are 4pm-10pm on Friday, 10am-6pm on Saturday and 11am-6pm on Sunday. The location will be the same as for the successful World of Amiga Toronto '95 – the International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., Mississauga, Ontario.

Christine Vetzal voice: (905) 665-9135
Ken McDavitt voice: (613) 721-1993
e-mail: ken@wonder.ca
www: http://www.wonder.ca/

Festival Amiga

Amazing Software and Accessories, along with RCD and Robinson Consulting will be holding Amiga Fest, in conjunction with Computer Fest, in November in Canada. Admission will be $10CDN or less and attendance is expected to be over 30,000.

Both Amiga and non-Amiga users will be able to see the latest from Amiga hardware and software developers as well as retailers. The show will be held November 29 through December 1 at the International Centre, 6900 Airport Rd., in Mississauga Ontario. An A4000T will be given away at the show.

New Prices Points

QuikPak Corporation, manufacturers of Amiga 4000T's in the United States, has lowered its prices. New prices are as follows: A4000T 850MB/6MB $1997US; A4060T 850MB/6MB - $2699US; A4060T 2GB/18MB/6X CD-ROM - $3249US; A4060T 4GB/34MB/8X CD-ROM - $3999US.

Included with every system is an Amiga Internet Kit with Netcom, worth $29.95US. A trade up to the A4060T is also available for $749US, after sending in a '040 CPU card from an A4000T with proof of purchase.



Contact Point

Mr. Michael Nixon
Amiga Imagine Study
e-mail: Mike Nixon@gnn.com

No More Lightwave

Miller Freeman, Inc. has announced the end of the Video Toaster User and LIGHTWAVEPRO magazines. The last issue of LIGHTWAVEPRO will be the October issue and the last issue of Video Toaster User will appear in January.

Current subscribers of Video Toaster User will be given the option of a refund or transfer to another publication from Miller Freeman, Inc. Subscribers of LIGHTWAVEPRO will similarly receive the option of a refund or a subscription to 3D Design Magazine. All subscribers to Video Toaster User and LIGHTWAVE PRO will receive a free evaluation issue of Digital Video Magazine.

Also from Miller Freeman, Inc. comes the announcement of a new publication directed at readers of Video Toaster User and LIGHTWAVEPRO magazines. Video Toaster & LightWave 3D will be a bi-annual special report to support users with news, tips, product information and special techniques.



This report will appear as an insert in the Digital Video and 3D Design magazines mentioned above for the spring and fall reports. No information was given as to the format of future issues.

The Video Toaster User Expo '96 will be unaffected by this change and will still take place November 5-8 at the Universal City Hilton & Towers in California. NewTek plans to announce information concerning new media strategies at the event.

Miller Freeman has announced the end of Video Toaster User and LIGHTWAVEPRO



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and swaying shadows, dark rooms which only become lit when the lightning outside and eerie
together to make this one of the most atmospheric beat-em-ups you could wish to see.
ad? You must be very interested in the game. Right? Well, go and buy it. Now! :) COMPUTING:
games of all time. Roll on Capital Punishment 2!" Semi-transparent 3D shadow that casts itself on the
floors by following the characters' movements at the rate of 25 frames per second AMIGA ACTION: OVERALL 95%
AMIGA FORMAT: "It's this kind of thing - being able to fake fatigue and such that gets Capital Punishment
ordinary and elevates it to a Format Gold. Knock an opponent onto the deck and you can still charge into them
on the floor, and continue kicking and punching them. Great stuff. In two player mode (or three or four if you fancy, because
there are league and tournament modes to play around with too) it's excellent fun. Take the time limit off and
out for as long as your hands can stand it without cramping up." CU AMIGA
JOKER "A clean technical KnockOut!" AMIGA FORMAT GOLD
CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT
1996
THE BEST
PXL
Pxl computers
clkboom@io.org
www.io.org/~clkboom/amiga/
CLICK
BOOM



Get artistic with LH Publishing's DrawStudio and take to the skies withJetPilot from Vulcan software

Extracting Cover Disk Files

Before you even think of putting the cover disks any where near your computer you should make sure you write protect them. Move the black tab in the top corner of the disk, so you can see through the hole. Doing this makes sure you cannot damage your disks in anyway. There is no reason why the cover disks need to be written to, so even if the computer asks you to write enable the disks, don't do it.

To extract any single archive, simply double click its icon, and follow the on screen instructions. If you want to quickly extract the program to Ram, select the NOVICE level on the welcome screen and press proceed once on the current screen and then again on the next. The program can then be found in your Ram disk. Normally most programs need further installing, so read the documents on how to do this.

Hard Drive Users

Hard drive users do not have to boot with the first disk, but you must make sure you have the Amiga's *Installer* program in your C drawer. To make sure your hard drive has the correct files in place, double click on the SetupHD icon. This will check if you have the Installer program, if not it will copy it across, don't worry it will not write over any existing files.

All you hard drive owners will find MultiExtract very useful. It is a separate method of extracting the cover disk files. It allows you to extract a number of files in one go, to your hard disk or Ram.

When you run MultiExtract, you will be presented with a number of check boxes each representing one of the programs on that cover disk. Just de-select all the programs you do not want extracting and then press proceed. All the selected programs can now miraculously be found in the selected destination.

multiExtract (0% done)

Pick which archives to extract.

super72new.lzx	Clipper.lzx
ToolTypeEditor.lzx	Copper-Demon.lzx
animdtpatch.lzx	CxBar.lzx
akJFIF.lzx	AmigaLoad.lzx
PSXView.lzx	odb.lzx
TruePub.lzx	SlipStream.lzx

Proceed | Abort Install | Help...

This is MultiExtract for all you sensible people with hard drives

To use the following program you need to have the Magic User Interface installed on your system. Without it you will not be able to run any MUI program. MUI is available from any good PD house.

Setting up DrawStudio

Author: LH Publishing
WB2.04 Hard Drive 4Mb RAM

DISK 1



Installation of DrawStudio is slightly different from usual, but equally as simple to do. Once you have let your machine boot up, insert the DrawStudio cover disk, double click on the disk icon and again on the install icon.

DrawStudio will be extracted to your Ram disk. You now need to move it to wherever you want it on your hard drive. DrawStudio is ready to run, so open the draw and double click on DrawStudio.

It is a fairly large program that it uses MUI so you will need a fair amount of memory to get it up and running. LH publishing say that 3Mb is the minimum, but we say 4Mb to be on the safe side and really 6Mb is required to get the very best out of all DrawStudio's amazing features.

If you are having memory trouble, check out the large range of available screen modes that DrawStudio provides. Along with being able to select the normal Amiga screens from 16 to 256 colours, DrawStudio itself has an internal display buffer that can be used in either mono, 256 or 24 bit colour. Obviously mono mode uses a fraction of the memory and has the fastest re-draw speed but you are stuck with a crude display.

In 24 bit mode you have access to all DrawStudio's finer display points, such as transparencies, but it normally needs around 1Mb of extra memory. If you are worried what the on screen preview will look like, DrawStudio uses a similar dither routine to Image Studio, so even on a 16 colour screen you can still get a good idea what the final print will be like.

CyberGraphX users will be glad to know that DrawStudio works with any supported graphic board, even though you cannot edit in 24 bit colour.



Only bother with the 24 bit mode if you have to view transparencies

DrawStudio

Whether you're an artist or can't draw to save your life, this program will change the way you feel about drawing programs. After a year in development, the authors of ImageStudio have come up with DrawStudio - a structured drawing package.

Unlike most drawing packages, DrawStudio is equally at home with both structured and bitmap elements. This allows you to create stunning images made up of an assortment of bitmaps and structured elements and either export the finished picture as a bitmap at any resolution you like or an EPS.

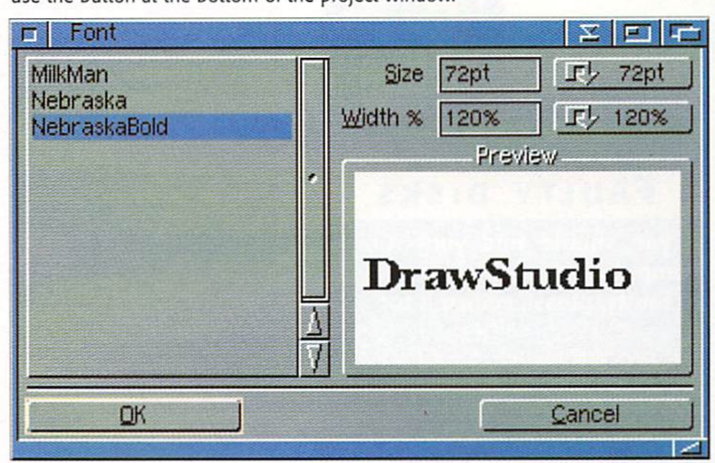
DrawStudio's interface has to be one of the most well developed and easy to use of any Amiga program. Making full use of MUI's amazing interface allowed the authors to concentrate on adding features never before seen in an Amiga program.

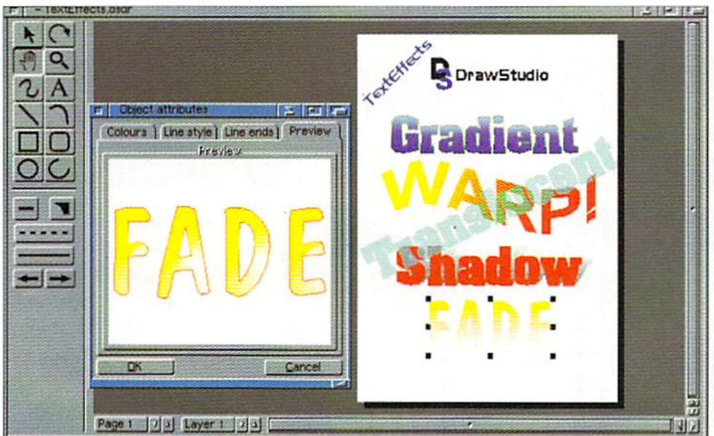
As you would expect, DrawStudio comes packed with the normal drawing tools available from the tool bar including line, rectangle, ellipse, rounded box, text, polygon, magnify, rotate and a hand tool to move the page around.

The real power of DrawStudio is in the effects that can be applied to objects you have drawn. Gradients, bitmaps, patterns and plain colour can all be added to any object and most effects can be previewed giving a perfect idea of how the finished image will look.

From the Effects menu you can distort certain types of objects loaded into DrawStudio. Bitmaps are restricted to rotating only but structured objects can have any one of eleven warps applied to them. An envelope mode allows you to draw the warp shape and once finished clicking outside of the picture makes DrawStudio apply the warp.

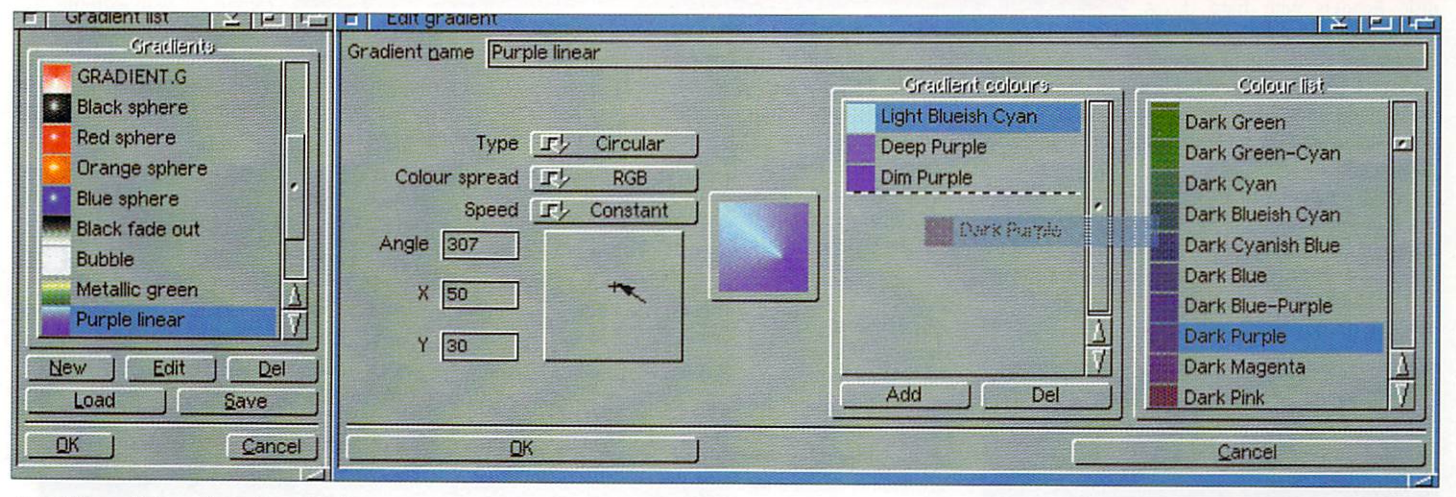
When dealing with a complex project it can become tricky to negotiate all the different objects you have in it. To help you out, DrawStudio has a Layer function. This allows objects to be grouped into separate overlaying sheets which can be made invisible or simply greyed out when not in use. To access and create layers use the button at the bottom of the project window.







Gradients



Fancy making some lovely looking gradients? Ooh you certainly can with DrawStudio

One thing that makes DrawStudio so good is the access to some amazingly powerful functions that are incredibly easy to use. Take the gradient creation tool, this lets you quickly create 24 bit colour gradients in seconds and every step is graphically displayed so you know exactly what the finished product will look like.

Gradients along with a number of other effects can be applied to text and any other drawn object through the attribute menu option. This opens a new window with a number of click tabs, one of which gives you a rendered preview.

If however, you select the gradient radio button and click edit, another window appears with a list of predefined gradients all of which have a thumbnail preview. Select edit and you can change every part of how the gradient should look by adding new colours and selecting the different gradients available.

DEMO FLIGHTS

The JetPilot demo has five demonstration flights to choose from. Four of them are rolling demos that you can sit back and watch, while the fifth puts you in the cockpit of a F-104 letting you get a feel for JetPilot.

1: F-104 Diamond nine formation
Nine F-104 in formation

2: F-104 Supersonic fly past
Two aircraft blasting over Leuchars tower

3: F-104 Ground controlled approach
An F-104 on 'talk down' top runway 27 at Leuchars

4: F-104 Twin take-off
A twin take-off and fly-by on a dull evening

5: F-104 Free flight

This puts you at the controls of a Belgian Air Force F-104G with 1500lb of fuel, which should last for about 20 minutes if you don't use too much re-heat.

Try the radio communications, switch to mouse pointer mode (left-alt), move the pointer to the top right of the display - the communications window appears. Click *Ask for weather*, wait for a reply by the approach controller and *Acknowledge* when flashing.

If you are familiar with the controls and ready for something more exciting, try a ground controlled approach:
Select talk down on channel 3. The communications channel can be changed on numeric keypad / and * or by clicking on *Channel*, press the right mouse button for up, left button for down.

Click on *Ask for GCA* and follow the instructions of the talk down controller. Remember to put flaps (C and V) and undercarriage (G) down before 6 miles, final approach speed is 170-160kts at 85-87% rpm. The approach can be monitored on the approach radar (F10 and numkey 3) from about 13 miles.

DISK 2



FAULTY DISKS

If you should find your Amiga Computing CoverDisk damaged or faulty, please return it to:

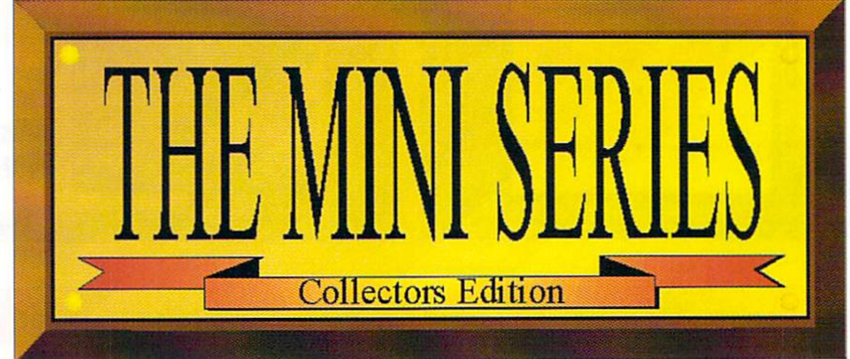
TIB Plc, TIB House, 11 Edward Street, Bradford, W. Yorks BD4 7BH.

Please allow 28 days for delivery

JETPILOT

Author: Vulcan Softare
1Mb Amiga

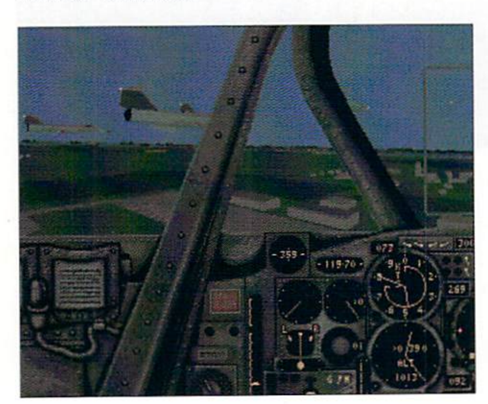
It has been a long time since a flight simulator came out on the Amiga, the last one I remember was TFX and that never got to see the light of day. Continuing its string of Amiga releases, Vulcan has now come up with its own flight simulator, JetPilot and it looks like one of the most realistic simulators since the Airbus series but with more action.



Running JetPilot is not too hard, just boot the JetPilot cover disk. Readers with hard drives can, as with all Vulcan games, drag the JetPilot drawer from the cover disk to where ever you like.

Once JetPilot has loaded you will end up on the main menu, from here you can set the detail level, demo flight, read the on-line manual and continue a paused game.

System allows you to configure how detailed the graphics should be. For most systems you are going to have to set the object density, scenery detail and visibility to the low or medium settings as the higher setting require an 040 to get a reasonable frame rate.



Demos lets you choose which of the five demos you want to watch. The first four are view only but the fifth lets you get your dirty mitts on a F-104. Hitting the run button on the side will start the demo that you want. At any stage during the game pressing Help will take you back to the menu from where you can go back by clicking continue, if you hadn't guessed.

The mouse controls elevator and ailerons, the mouse buttons are used to set rudder and to steer while taxiing on the ground. An A4-Size area is needed for full travel of aileron and elevator and the mouse should be placed just above the centre of this area as the elevator has to travel further up than it is to go down.

All other major controls are located on the left side of the keyboard and should be operated with the left hand while the right hand can remain with the mouse for most of the time. Sorry, if you are left handed, but this is just how aeroplanes are.

Flying an aeroplane by mouse might seem to be slightly odd at the beginning, but after an initial learning phase all manoeuvres can be carried out with extreme precision. Move the mouse slowly, do not attempt erratic manoeuvres before you know what the result will be. Remember that the response of an aircraft is sharper at high speeds and low level than at low speeds and high level.



JetPilot Controls

Left-Amiga	Aileron centre function
Ctrl	Lock control positions
Ctrl + Left Shift	Reset elevator trim, aileron and rudder to neutral
Tab and '	Throttle control
A and Z	Adjust air brak es
S and X	S increases brake pressure. S and X holds current brake pressure
D and C	Adjust landing flaps
F and V	Adjust take off flaps
G	Lower raise under carriage
B	release brake chute
Help	Switches back to the main menu

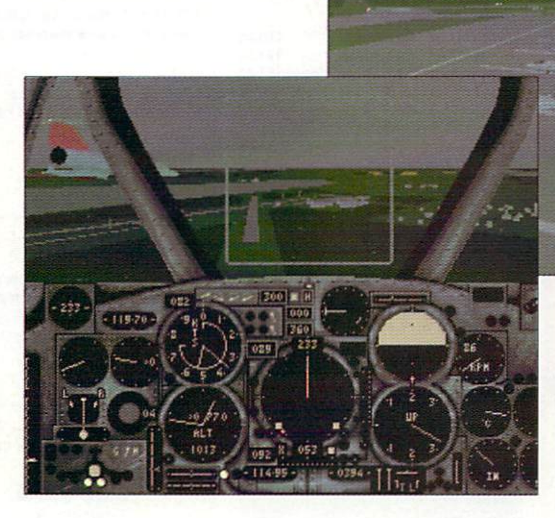
View controls

Arrow keys	move view
Escape	Look up
F1/F2	look left/right
F3/F4	look back left/back
F5	return to cockpit
F6	switch to outside view
F7	switch to spot view
F8	switch to track view
F9	display map
F10	switch to control room

Numeric keypad

1	Surveillance radar
2	approach radar
3	aircraft movements
-	decrease radar range
+	increase radar range
(and)	change airfield
/ and *	track aircraft





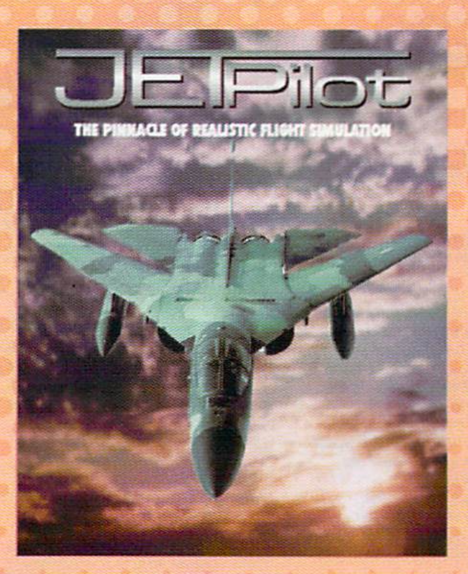
JetPilot looks realistic and is ideal for all arm-chair pilots

Reader Offer

Only available through Mail Order

Get your hands on a copy of Vulcan's forthcoming flight sim





Please send me a copy of JetPilot for the Amiga to:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

Post Code

Telephone

Send your completed form and payment to:

I enclose a CHEQUE/POSTAL ORDER *for the value of* £16.99 (£18.99 *overseas)*

Please make payable to: Vulcan Software Limited.

Please charge my ACCESS/MASTERCARD/VISA *with*

Credit Card Number:

/ / /   / / /   / / /   / / /

Expiry date   *Signature*

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17 Bit 2 CD Collection	24.95
17 Bit & LSD Comp. 1, 2 (Spec)	15.95
17 Bit & LSD Comp. 3	22.95
1078 Weird Textures	19.95
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Primarily Golden Image are selling an IDE CD-ROM for either the A1200 or the A4000. Along with this however, they are also selling the AlphaQuatro, an EIDE expansion board that allows you to add an extra two IDE devices to your A1200 or A4000. The board simply has three interconnected IDE sockets - one connects to the Amiga's original IDE interface, the second goes to the internal hard drive and the third is used to connect the third and fourth EIDE devices.

With an A4000 the extra IDE device, being either a CD-ROM or hard drive, can be mounted internally, while on an A1200 they will have to be connected up outside of the computer, which involves trailing a lead out of the A1200.

For A1200 owners Golden Image have come up with a novel idea in the form of an external conversion kit for an internal IDE CD-ROM. This gives you a box into which the CD-ROM drive is inserted. A bottom plate is then slid into place and the power, sound and IDE connections are plugged into the back of the drive. The unit is then screwed together and you are left with a reasonable external CD-ROM drive.

Power for the unit is provided from the disk drive port with the supplied cable. This is a potential problem as I would expect an eight speed drive would draw more power than a plain old floppy drive and if you are running a fast accelerator and 3.5" hard drive you may run into power problems - however everything seemed to work fine with the unit we were supplied with.

If you are not too keen to muck around with the insides of your A1200 Golden Image do provide an alternative to the AlfaQuatro in the form of a PC slot device. This works in conjunction with its external CD-ROM model and gives you a standard 50 way 3.5" IDE interface sticking out the side of your A1200.

As supplied with Eyetech's CDPlus you get the IDEFix software. This provides both the necessary drivers for the CD-ROM but also has a software patch that will ensure everything works correctly with the EIDE interface.

The actual software is very nice and Pick CD makes setting the DOS driver a matter of clicking on a couple of buttons. You also get an AudioCD player which is quite well written and can be 'zipped' to a single title bar so it can be kept out of the way. It would have been better as a commodity so you could hide the interface but you can't have everything can you? Before I forget you also get some very comprehensive CD32 emulation software, so you can play all those great CD32 games.

So for A4000 owners what does Golden Image offer above just buying yourself an IDE CD-ROM from your local PC World? Well for starters you get the very good IDEFix software, along with this you also get the simple AlphaQuatro board - if you already have two internal IDE drives this is an absolute necessity.

As for A1200 owners the Golden Image drive is not as well executed as either Eyetech's or Siren's drives as you basically have to make up the external CD-ROM case yourself and I am not too keen on the floppy drive power connector, but with the very low price and the simpler PC slot interface it does have its good points.

Choices, Choices

Complete set for A4000	
Quad speed CD-ROM plus AlfaQuatro and software	£109
Eight speed CD-ROM plus AlfaQuatro and software	£149
Complete set for A1200	
Quad speed CD-ROM plus PCMCIA controller and software	£149
Eight speed CD-ROM plus PCMCIA controller and software	£189
Individually	
AlfaQuatro plus software	£59
Quad speed drive	£59
Eight speed drive	£99
2.5" to 3.5" IDE cable	£15
External CD-ROM case plus cables	£39
PCMCIA controller	£69

Bottom line

Requirements

RED *essential* **BLACK** *recommended*



Product details

Product	AlphaQuatro
Supplier	Golden Image
Price	See boxout
Tel	0181-900 9291

Scores

Ease of use	72%
Implementation	82%
Value For Money	90%
Overall	84%

Andy Maddock returns despite suffering from flu and continually coughing and spluttering to bring you the latest **CDs**



Laser guidance

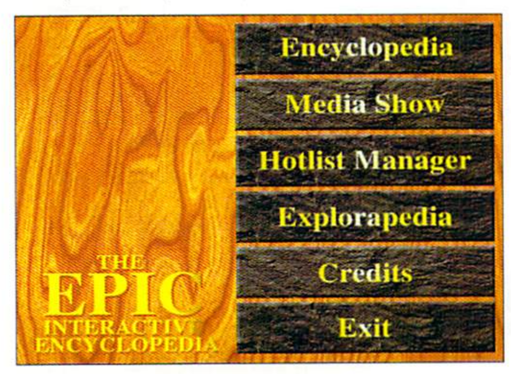
EPIC INTERACTIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA

Epic Marketing were once well-known for their contribution to the Amiga CD-ROM market. They still are, only they have decided to branch out with their Amiga range and produce a complete multimedia package which will appeal to a variety of age groups from children to adults.

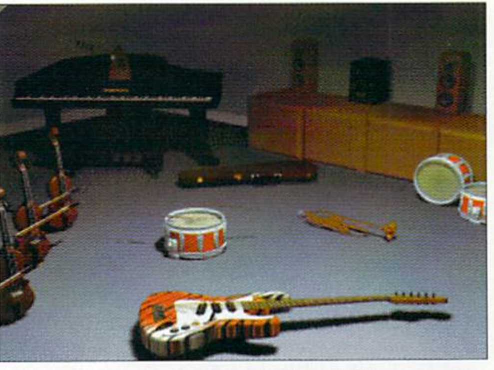
To many people encyclopaedias are books which cost around £50 and give you a short description of many things from around the world. But they are of course much more than that.

For example, they contain information about things that have never before crossed your mind. Bhangra, for instance is punjabi pop music. Cytoplasm is a cell which surrounds the Nucleus within one's body and an Ichneumon fly is a parasite wasp which dominates Northern America. See, these are all fantastically trivial facts which were designed none other than to bore your mates with down the pub.

I'm joking of course. Although I do know that encyclopaedias are very useful. They have written my A-Level English essays once too often!



The main menu screen certainly looks very pretty doesn't it?



This rendered screen is for kids. You can click, learn and play without moving a muscle

The only problem with the whole idea of encyclopaedias is there is so much information that a new revised book has to be introduced every so often, which is not only damaging to your book shelves with the weight but to your wallet and bank balance – huge reference books don't come cheap. Who can solve that problem? The Amiga, of course.

Epic Marketing consider its encyclopaedia package to be its flagship product as it has been designed to be an on-going project, of which more later.

Before you begin rooting through masses of information, the installation process is required. The nice easy installer will place all the required filetypes in the right place and will leave you with a complete set-up ready at the click of a mouse button.

The package is very polished, with high resolution menu screens and a professional colour scheme. The Epic CD certainly puts Grolier among others, graphically to shame.

It's very difficult to compare the amount of detail between Epic and Grolier CDs as they both contain roughly the same subjects. I can't just degrade Epic's overall score just because it fails to contain sheep – although, I did have to think about it very carefully.

What makes the package a delight to use is that it's just so friendly. The menu buttons are large and easily readable and it's very easy to find information on your chosen topic.

Usually, printed encyclopaedia's contain a very small typeface due to the amount of space each topic requires. The Epic CD manages to avoid this problem by printing huge text as there is little space restriction. This also makes it ideal for youngsters.

The main menu screen is divided into four main boxes. The large one on the far left contains the actual topics of information and the smaller boxes contained within the border are for handy features such as search, up and down and a link to your hotlist.

The box at the foot of the screen contains the topic information, while the box above contains special features such as sample, film clip and speak.

If you click on a topic which includes a sample, you may listen to a relevant sound. The film clip option allows you to watch a brief moment of animation at the bottom right of the screen. These are very rare and will only appear on pop-

EPIC INTERACTIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA *CONT.*

ular, large subjects.

The speak option allows the text to be read back to you in Amiga Workbench fashion. This feature first appeared on W1.3 whereby messages could be typed in and said back to you in a robot-like voice. It may be an important feature for someone who is visually impaired, although I feel It doesn't quite work.

The final box contains an image relevant to the topic. Memory and disk access could've been the main problem here, however, Epic have managed to avoid the problem by carefully organising the inner workings of the entire package

When I first loaded up the product I was pleasantly surprised to see that children were high on the agenda of Epic's marketing strategy. There is a special "learn" section of the CD which enables you to click on some rendered rooms and virtually play with the objects within.

After it plays a sample or has finished animating, a requester box appears which allows you to find out more information on what you have played with. For example, if you click on the drum it will give a detailed description of musical instruments. There are six locations including space and a workshop.

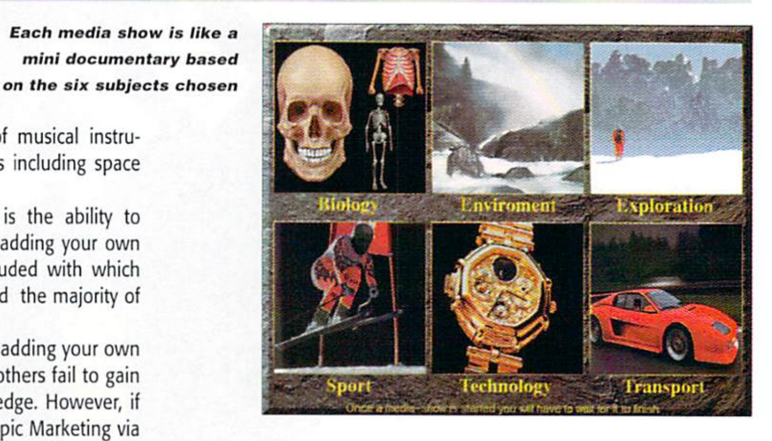
Another excellent feature is the ability to update the encyclopaedia by adding your own topics. There is program included with which you can just click on "add" and the majority of the work is done for you.

You may think the idea of adding your own topics is slightly pointless as others fail to gain the benefit from your knowledge. However, if you send your new topic to Epic Marketing via a floppy disk or the World Wide Web, they will add it to their already packed database of encyclopaedia topics. The may even pay you too.

Epic themselves will also be uploading topic subjects onto their web page for users to download. They will also supply them on floppy disks.

Overall, the package does have a lot to offer and is fantastic value for money. However, you must remember, the complete "Deluxe" version requires an A1200/A4000 with a hard drive a CD drive and at least 4MB RAM. The "Lite" version uses ECS and will need and A500, A600 or A1200 with the same specs except that you will need at least 2MB RAM.

Each media show is like a mini documentary based on the six subjects chosen





The Beatles always manage to get themselves onto every encyclopaedia available

Bottom line

PRODUCT DETAILS

Product:	Epic Interactive Encyclopaedia
Supplier:	Epic Marketing
Price:	£29.99
Phone:	0500 131 486 Overseas: +44 1793 514188

SCORES

Ease of use	90%
Implementation	88%
Value For Money	90%
Overall	90%

AMIGA REPAIR KIT

There is no escaping the fact that your Amiga may decide to suddenly pack its bags and decide never to work again. There have been occasions when we've needed to use an application at a crucial time, and we have found a read or write error. These particular problems need to be resurrected as quickly as possible. There are many utilities knocking about which will correct all the headers in a disk and you can find them in places like Aminet, and on coverdisks. However, The Amiga Repair Kit CD from Weird Science gives you the best possible collection of Amiga antibiotics which will enable you to back-up and restore all your data.

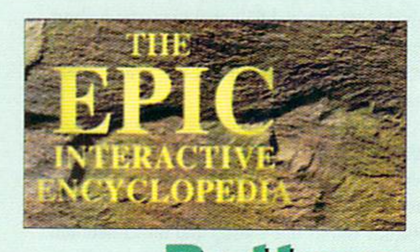
The CD contains a few commercial programs like the brand new DiskSalv 4 by Dave Haynie, which is the best program available on the Amiga which will restore any data you may lose off floppy disks or your hard drive. This is invaluable especially if you use your Amiga for work purposes.

There is also a few programs which can recover vital information regarding your partition structure. One of them is called RDB-Salv, this will happily back-up and restore your disk blocks, preventing any disasters.

There are many other general programs contained on the CD which will happily act as a toolbox and repair any damage caused by any crashes which our Amiga is noted for and you won't have to lift a finger.

The only drawback is the price. You'd have to be very unlucky or just clumsy with the Amiga to get your money's worth from this CD.





Bottom line

PRODUCT DETAILS

Product:	Amiga Repair Kit
Supplier:	Weird Science
Price:	£49.95
Phone:	0116 234 0682

SCORES

Ease of use	83%
Implementation	89%
Value For Money	71%
Overall	85%



Kara Kara chameleon

Neil Mohr never liked **Culture Club**, but likes these fonts

Around a year ago Cloanto brought out the Personal Suite CD, a collection of all the programs in Cloanto's Personal series. Since then we have not seen much from the company until now, with the release of the Kara Collection.

The biggest draw for the CD is the large collection of the excellent quality Kara colour fonts. There is a good chance many people have never heard of Amiga colour fonts, even though they have been supported by the operating system since Workbench 2 and were introduced with DPaint all those many years back.

Simply colour fonts are normal Amiga bitmap fonts that include additional colour data, allowing them to have highlight, gradients or whatever colouring effects the designer wants and these are unique to the Amiga.

Generally for all the 28 different style of colour fonts you get 3 different sizes varying around 80, 100 and 115 pts using 16 colours. Some have been designed to give a 'hand written' where all the lower case letter's tails join neatly on to the next letter and do look quite swish. All fonts come in three different formats – standard Amiga bitmaps, BTitler and finally for Cloanto's ColourType font editor.

Five anim fonts come with the CD, these are animated versions of the original Kara colour fonts and fit in right along with their stationary sisters and brothers. For every font, each letter of the alphabet is a standard IFF AnimBrush allowing you to easily import them to DPaint or Brilliance. Lucky old PPaint owners will be able to take advantage of a special PPaint Rexx script that makes putting together AnimFont animations a piece of cake.

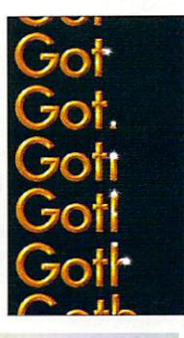
For both the anim and colour fonts, a selection of replacement palettes are available giving you a greater choice as you will be able to alter the font's colour scheme to suit the situation.

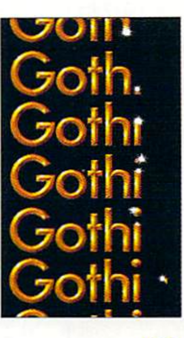
To support all these files on the CD you get a fully functioning demo version of Personal Paint 6.4 and the full versions of ColourType and Personal Font Maker 1.2 to help you get the best out of them. One other touched I liked were the tutorials in the form of long animations, a total of 30 minutes are available. These take you step by step through different techniques using the programs and fonts on the CD and are a simple but welcome addition.

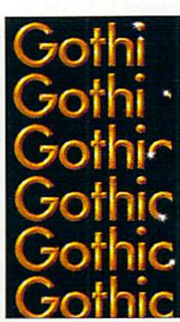
For anyone involved with video titling the Kara Collection provides a whole new spring of quality fonts all ready to be dropped into place. AC



A fine selection of good looking Amiga colour fonts is the key to the Kara Collection







Plaque Grounds

To give you something interesting to overlay all those tasty looking Kara fonts on to, there is a selection of plaque grounds. They come in eight different types of natural materials ranging from the usual granite and marble stone textures to copper and wood.

All are available in a good number of sizes and formats, with separate aspect correct PAL and NTSC versions. Four sizes of plaques are on the CD all are 638 pixels wide and come in either 93, 125, 173 or 397 pixels high with varying styles of borders. All of which come in 16, 256, 24 bit and Jpeg image formats.

The plaques are excellent quality and whatever your needs, there is a version of the plaques to suite you. It does seem odd that the original full screen 752x480/580 textures are not available, as the selection of plaque styles is limited and if you want to create your own you really need the original full screen textures.

You can of course use both the Kara fonts and Plaque grounds together, the only thing you may have to watch for is that the plaques are light soured from the top-left while certain Kara fonts are light sourced from the bottom-right. You will probably want to flip the plaque to line up the source of the light sources.



The provided plaques are excellent even though they are limited in variety

Bottom line

Product Details

Product	Kara Collection CD
Supplier	Emerald Creative
Price	£TBA
Tel	0181 715 8866
US Supplier	Software Hut
Price	$89.95
Tel	610 586-5701

Scores

Ease of use	95%
Implementation	93%
Value For Money	82%
Overall	90%

Orders Only
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dkb

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Exclusive - **Paul Austin** explores the all-new hardware and sizzling software at the heart of the Dragon



Draco's heart

Classic computer hardware, like great wines, often take time to mature. Perhaps the perfect example of this is the evolution of the VLab frame grabber into the all powerful Draco AV workstation, delivering broadcast quality video encoding and real-time playback alongside CD quality sound.

A major element in the transformation was the break from the standard Amiga environment with the launch of the Draco. Although the original Draco offered a revolutionary base for Amiga OS, some people found the Dragon, or more accurately Movieshop, a little difficult to tame.

The main problem for the novice was a seemingly endless array of requesters within Movieshop, which for some, poured the odd cup of cold water on the overall Draco experience. With this in mind MacroSystem has overhauled MovieShop completely. With the arrival of version 4.0 the interface and more importantly its functionality has been totally transformed.

Movieshop - new and improved

The most obvious feature of Movieshop's latest incarnation is the fresh approach to the programme's legendary collection of requesters. No doubt with inspiration drawn from MUI, MovieShop has taken the logical step of grouping like-minded requesters together.

Combine the new approach with the advent of a designer look and you end up with an improved aesthetic, but more importantly a fast, tidy and efficient method of navigating the huge range of features on offer. The improved GUI is great, but even this pales in comparison when compared to some of the new features tucked away inside it.

At the heart of the renaissance is the liaison between the new DracoMotion and the upgraded software. Thanks to the duet it is now possible to almost guarantee error free encoding and playback.

One of the most infuriating problems in the past was occasional and unexpected playback or encoding errors while employing high jpeg compression settings, digitising particularly complex scenes or producing a highly complex special effect. Previously, once the jpeg compression rate was set, it was set in stone.

For example, if you were working on a would-be masterpiece and thereby pushing the Draco to its limits regarding compression

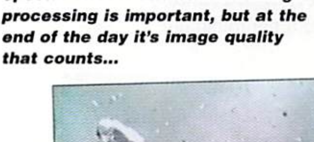
THE HARD FACTS

Needless to say a software update is not the only factor in the latest evolution of the Draco. The new DracoMotion card, more than anything else is the real key to the improved performance.

In simple terms the new card can encode and play video as fast as the fastest hard drives can deliver it. Strangely enough the board itself has actually shrunk considerably, down to a half height Zorro.

This is even more impressive considering that the Toccata 16 bit sampler has also been re-worked and built on to the same PCB. Courtesy of a ribbon cable and a selection of four RCA/phono connections, the Draco AV duet has now been boiled down onto a single card.

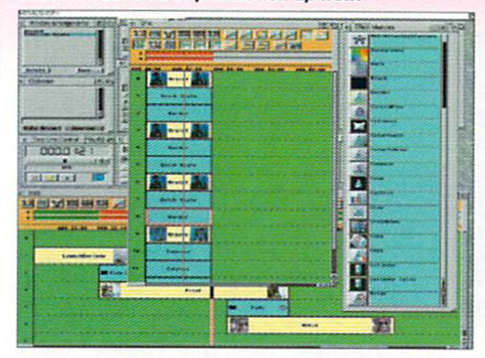
Admittedly the new audio option doesn't offer the multiple inputs of the Toccata, but for use within the basic Movieshop environment there's no perceivable difference between the two. In an ideal world you'd add a Toccata to the system as a bonus, but you can certainly get by with a single card if video production is your primary passion.



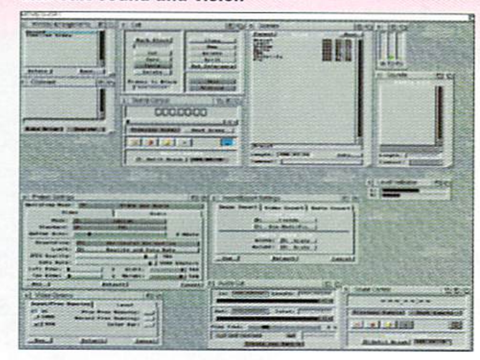
Special effects and endless image processing is important, but at the end of the day it's image quality that counts...



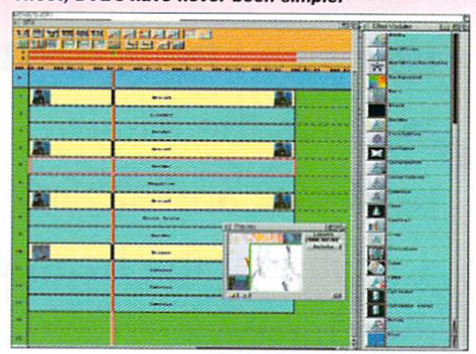
The all new Timeline in full flow with the main movie in the background and a custom built DVE in production up front



Movieshop in all its glory. Just about every requester you'll ever need to import, export and edit sound and vision



Thanks to multiple Timelines, unlimited video layers and the option to save user defined effect, DVE's have never been simpler



and transfer, it was easy to push things too far further down the line, breaking playback under the stain.

Fortunately these problems are now put to the sword forever with the advent of limited data rates and variable compression setting within a project. In English this means the Draco is now capable of compensating for the idiosyncrasies of the moving image.

Thanks to the newly found ability to alter a project's jpeg compression, there are two alternatives to the traditional set it and forget it option.

The first is to lock the transfer rate to that of your drive. At this point Movieshop will vary the compression of the encoded video to achieve the optimum image quality in relation to the drives transfer speed. The second option combines the two by defining a preferred jpeg compression setting and also specifying the transfer rate of the drive. Obviously this mode offers a number of benefits. Firstly it avoids the problem of encode or play breaks due to over ambitious jpeg settings. The same is true regarding transfer rate specification. Errors however, aren't really the issue. On relatively simple video sequences Movieshop is more than capable of encoding 100 per cent jpeg images. But given that anything at or above 90% is a virtually perfect replica of the original footage, the real headache is wasted space, not project security. By defining an upper jpeg limit wasted space isn't a problem.



With Movieshop no longer limited to a set jpeg rate per project, the user is free to define jpeg compression on a scene by scene basis if necessary. Thereby squeezing the maximum amount of footage from the minimum amount of available space.

A further huge improvement is the ability to open and recall multiple timelines. The Timeline is the key to the creation of digital video effects or DVE's. By combining numerous operators it's possible to create incredibly complex effects.

Unfortunately in the previous versions, only one Timeline was allowed per project. This meant creating custom DVE's from scratch, saving new scenes and adding these uneditable effects back into the Timeline.

Thanks to the new found ability to save Timelines, you can now build a complex effect in a timeline and save it. This allows you to reload it later or employ variants the same editable effects time and time again. All you need is to add the appropriate footage. In short, hours of re-design time is saved at a stroke.

Better still, you can even save custom built DVE's from a project, saving them as a standalone special effect and reapply them on totally different projects.

Inside the software

You're probably bored with being reminded that Movieshop is literally fit to burst with features. So in order to cut a very long story slightly shorter, it's probably wise to stick to the latest additions, one of the most inspired of which has arrived in the new look Timeline window. Aside from the flashy control icons, the window now features a backing track option.

Lets assume you're editing a music video. The biggest problem you're likely to encounter is lip/instrument sync. Thanks to this new option you can place a master shot of the entire song in the backing track.

With the backing track in place, you can edit the rushes, slot in special effects wherever you want and add them to the timeline - safe in the knowledge that whenever the Timeline encounters a gap in the stream edits, it will be automatically filled by the backing track, which of course is always in perfect sync with the sound track.

Aside from added features, the Timeline enjoys much improved functionality. In previous versions of Movieshop adding and editing elements in the Timeline was a pretty labour intensive pastime.

Fortunately along with the re-design comes a re-think. Basically MacroSystem has made the next step in its approach to drag and drop editing. Now you can not only drop scenes into the Timeline but also multi-select items, drag select entire sections and copy as well as simply move sections of the movie.

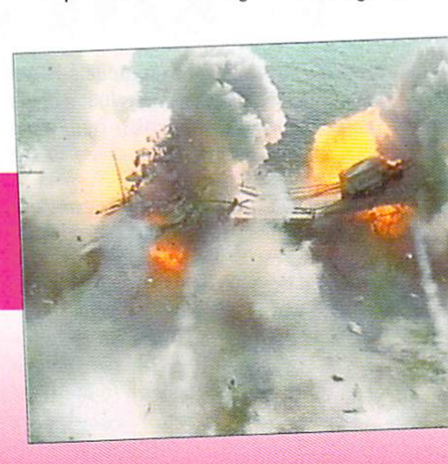
Although this may not sound particularly astounding, it actually provides a means of saving hours of design time. Lets assume you've built a particularly complex DVE as your default special effecting in a movie.

Previously you would have to either build the effect in the timeline, create a new scene from the end result, replace the video with new material, create a new scene and keep repeating the process until all the DVE's were ready to drop into the final Timeline. Alternatively you could manually build lots of copies throughout the Timeline using different video sequences. Either way it was a painstaking exercise.

Thanks to the new multi-select and copy options you can simply build one effect, select all its component operators and copy them as many times as required throughout the production - adding new footage as







The Draco Difference

For those unfamiliar with the finer points of the system it's worth running over the basic Draco/Movieshop concept. Needless to say the Draco's primary mission is that of an AV workstation.

Fortunately, the Draco can do much more besides. Essentially the Draco offers the same functionality as an 060 based Amiga equipped with a fast scsi II hard disk controller, a 4 Meg 24 bit display card, a quad speed CD-Rom and a 16 bit sound sampler.

However, it must be stressed that the Draco can never be 100 per cent compatible with all Amiga software and cards. Having said that, any application or cards that stick to the Commodore standard will work directly in the Draco.

During testing I couldn't find a single power application that wouldn't run. The only obvious none starters are applications or cards that demand the AGA chipset or like Scala and TVPaint, require Amiga mouse port dongles - which the Draco doesn't have.

Possibly the most important advance in the software compatibility stakes is the new found affinity with Lightwave. In the past Newtek's 3-D masterpiece ran on the Draco, but in reality it was virtually unusable due to horrible screen corruption in Modeller and an inability to playback wireframe previews in Layout.

The story remains the same regarding Layout previews, but to be fair this isn't a problem caused by the Draco. Like all other third party display cards, with the exception of the Picaso II, the Draco's Retina isn't supported by the software. Alas only Newtek can solve this particular problem.

However, MacroSystem has not only managed to fix the Modeller display problems but has also added direct rendering of Lightwave to the Movieshop video partition. As a result you can not only render direct but also use the same option to send previews to the partition - thereby side stepping the third party support problems for previews.

Thanks to the Lightwave_to_Movieshop ARexx tool you not only have the option for previews and finals but also avoids the ever present problem of storage space.

Without direct encoding all Lightwave's output would have to be saved to disk and then imported as frames into Movieshop. Obviously this has two drawbacks, it's a slow process and more importantly, it eats up lots of valuable hard drive space.

Using the new approach each file is rendered to Ram, encoded on the video partition and then deleted from Ram. End result, instant video resolution 3-D animations with no overheads.

Perhaps the only Amiga tradition missing form the overall Draco equation is standard Amiga audio. Although a growing band of applications are offering Toccata support, not all can make themselves heard.

To be honest, this is probably personal point, inspired by the lack of sound on the Mac side, or should I say the DracoMac side. During testing I set up ShapeShifter 3.5 on the Draco with amazing results. It didn't just run, it sprinted. On a standard speed test it rated 2.5 times faster than a Quadra 700. In the real-world this roughly equates to 100Mhz PowerPC performance.

Better still every Mac package tested, with the exception of PhotoShop, ran perfectly. This includes such notables as Quark Express, Netscape 3.0, Illustrator, Fractal Painter, Bryce, Microsoft Word, Excel, Premier, Director 5 the list goes on and on... The bottom line, an instant saving of a couple of grand on a new Power Mac.

---

required. Better still, the Timeline offers two new methods of adding footage to the Timeline. In the past you simply dropped items on the Timeline and dragged them around as required. Now you also have the option insert mode, which automatically slots a new scene directly before an existing one. Alternatively there's the new replace mode which automatically swaps the new scene for the old one. The massive advantage of replace is that it not only exchanges scenes, but will, if necessary, shorten the new scene to match its predecessor. Needless to say, this is a massive advantage if you want to produce copies of complex DVE's with different footage in each. Yet another sparkling addition is the arrival of mpeg support. In addition to recording straight to tape you can now output scenes as mpeg files. Courtesy of the mpeg output window you can elect to save standard mpeg1 files or apply user defined options.

This may not sound particularly awe-inspiring to the average Amiga owner. However, if you're involved in any kind of multimedia production it's an absolute god send. I tested the option by outputting an mpeg movie, firing-up ShapeShifter, converting the mpeg into a QuickTime using Sparkle, adding a Draco generated soundtrack in Premier and incorporating the finished movie into a Director presentation. Oh yes, in case you're wondering, the mpeg/QuickTime quality is superb...

Jargon Box

DVE's – Digital Video Effects

AV – Audio Video

PCB – Printed Circuit Board

Dongles – Hardware copy protection

GUI – Graphical User Interface

The bottom line

As you've probably gathered I'm a serious Draco fan. Although there's been the odd quirk in previous Draco/Movieshop incarnations, the new combination of the DracoMotion and Movieshop v4.0 make the combo nothing short of a world beater.

It's always been something of a mystery to me why the Draco hasn't enjoyed the acclaim in deserves. Perhaps it's loyalty to the Amiga, perhaps it's simply a lack of awareness, but thanks to this upgrade nobody can ignore the monster with an Amiga at its heart.

In my opinion the Draco more than deserves the level of respect usually reserved for the Toaster and it's sibling, the all conquering Lightwave.

Even with its new user friendly face, Movieshop is still a complex product especially regarding the creation of DVE's, but spend a couple of days with the manual and you'll be astonished what can be achieved. Quite literally imagination is the only restriction. In short, the upgrades are superb and there's certainly nothing on the Amiga platform, or indeed any other, that can compare with the combination of price and performance on offer from the Draco. If you're serious about AV production you've got to get one. It's that simple.





Bottom line

Requirements

RED *essential* | **BLACK** *recommended*

Essential: Video hardware: Composite, YC
BetaCam input available via hardware add-on

Recommended: 32 Mb Ram
Recommended: 17 inch monitor

Product details

Product	Draco/Movieshop 4.0
Supplier	Whiteknight Technologies
Price	TBA
Tel	01920 822 321

Scores

Ease of use	87%
Implementation	97%
Value For Money	93%
Overall	95%

Christmas *Spirit*

There's nothing like a drop of shandy to get your Christmas party in full swing. Here at **Amiga Computing** we cracked open some cans, cooked up some tasty mince pies and had a look what the team had bought each other for Christmas.

Tina's sack of presents....

World Wide Comms

This Sportster modem would make an ideal present for anyone looking into getting connected. And because freelancer, Gareth likes making lots of new friends on the Internet, I chose this for him.

If you're feeling especially generous, the 33,600 version is a super fast modem and what you shell out for initially is compensated by the reduced downloading time - hence cheaper phone bills.

The Sportster also has other useful features such as V.42 and V.42bis error correction and data compression. It also proves very useful for sending Class 1 or 2 faxes and supports voice-mail too.

Although there is no commercial voice-mail software support for the Amiga, if you can get hold of a copy of AmiPhone, you should be able to take advantage of it. In use, the Sportster is fast and reliable and as it's pretty easy to set up, there shouldn't be any tantrums on Boxing Day.

Product: Sportster VI Modem
Price: 14,400 = £98.99
33,600 = £161.99
Contact: First Computer Centre, 0113 231 9444



The good old Reno Drive proved an excellent choice for Andy's Christmas present. Renowned for his love of playing the same music CD over and again, this present allowed him to play his CDs quietly with the supplied headphones. And what Andy doesn't realise yet is that this nifty drive also works as a dual-speed CD-ROM - just perfect for all those Laser Guidance reviews he'll have to do.

You'll need a Squirrel SCSI interface but it's all very simple to set up. You simply attach the docking station - a small adapter which then connects to the Squirrel SCSI interface.

The only grumbles about the product would be that, as a portable CD player, it requires four batteries which will only give you 90 minutes of play – however there is a mains Adapter. And as a dual-speed, it's not the fastest drive available. But for most Amiga owners needs, this provides a versatile solution.

Product: Reno Portable CD-ROM Drive
Price: £99.95
Supplier: First Computer Centre
Contact: 0113 231 9444



As for 'Walter Softie' Neil's present, I thought I'd toughen him up a bit in time for the New Year, so bought him Capital Punishment. A superb beat-'em-up, this highly regarded game scored an impressive 95% when it was reviewed a couple of months ago.

You can take on the character of one of the many fighters from Demona, a scantily clad warrior woman or a muscle-bound brute called Wakantanka. You can either play against the Amiga or a friend and the aim is simple - bash up the opposition with karate kicks, upper-cut punches and smacks around the chops.

Crammed with excellent graphics, imaginative backdrops and grisly effects, Capital Punishment is one of the best fighting games of all time. However, if you think this will make a good present for someone check beforehand that they have a hard drive (essential) and around 15Mb free to install it. Although the game will run on an unexpanded A1200, FastRAM is recommended.

Product: Capital Punishment
Price: £29.99
Developer: ClickBOOM
Contact: 001 416 868 6388

Print With Style

New office tea boy, Hugh Poynton has recently graduated from University, and as a typical student is still far too skint to actually buy his own Christmas cards. So the inspired idea for Hugh's present was the Epson Stylus Colour Printer.

This meant that Hugh could make his own cards and print them off for his friends, well friend. Epson's latest printer, the Stylus 500 is a true 720 dpi model and can output either in colour or greyscale.

To run, you will need some third party software which has Stylus drivers – for example, TurboPrint or Enprint. The quality of prints that you can produce with this Stylus is very impressive - especially if you output at 720 dpi on Epson's specially coated paper which ensures the coloured inks don't blur. So if you're feeling generous this year, this Epson printer will prove an excellent choice.

Product: Epson Stylus 500
Price: £291
Supplier: Epson
Contact: 01442 61144

Andy's generous gifts......

Seedy CDs

For Neil's Christmas present, I decided to buy a selection of Amiga CDs. The reason is that Neil does have a CD-Drive at home which means he won't be restricted to using them within the office.

I've recently noticed that he has been keeping an eye on the Adult Sensations collection from Epic Marketing. There are four in the series including Sexy Sensations and Adult Sensations 3D. Each CD is priced at £19.99, so they're fairly cheap.

Each CD contains around 4000 high quality 256 colour images of women, sexy music, adult stories, black and white '70s photos and finally some animations.

This makes the perfect present for Neil as his first love has always been the Amiga, closely followed by what can only be described as, scantily dressed women.

Product: Adult Sensations CDs
Price: £19.99 each
Supplier: Epic Marketing
Contact: 0500 131 486
Overseas: +44 1793 514188

Browse The Web

The finished version of IBrowse would definitely make a good present for Neil judging by the time he spends on-line. He often makes a habit of visiting his favourite pages such as The Spice Girls, The Amiga Web Directory, Courteney Cox's and The Mike and the Mechanics homepage. Also, he still uses the demo version and hasn't yet treated himself to the full product.

Buying him IBrowse would allow him to view all types of new Web page features such as animated GIFs and tables - which is where all other Amiga Web Browsers fell flat on their faces.

The images from a Web page will appear

Christmas *Spirit*

Neil digs deep into his wallet for his workmates...

quickly due to IBrowse's internal image decoder which will make his time on the World Wide Web much more enjoyable and not to mention cheaper.

IBrowse received a score of 92% in November's issue of *Amiga Computing* and at £29.95, it surely must be one of the cheapest and most user-friendly browsers ever. It is without doubt a perfect Christmas present.

Product: IBrowse
Supplier: Hi-Soft
Price: £29.95
Contact: 01525 718181

Extra Additions

If I had an unlimited amount of cash to spend on my great work mates I'd certainly buy the SX32 CD expander, and I would make the gift tag out to Tina.

The poor girl doesn't own an Amiga, but we all agree that she should stay in more often and play great games such as Ruffian and Cool Spot. We obviously can't be generous enough to buy her a brand new Amiga, although there is a CD32 knocking about the office. I'm so kind that I'd even let her spend her Christmas time installing it.

The SX32 would make an ideal present for existing CD32 owners as they can increase it to that of a fully functioning A1200 giving more use out of the pretty much redundant games machine.

The package comes with a chip board which slides into the back of the CD32, a keyboard, a hard drive and an external disk drive. The hard drive fits nicely into the casing and disappears out of view. It sits quietly in the CD32 itself, reducing the need for external peripherals.

My only reservation would be the price. £200 may seem slightly expensive for merely a Christmas present, but what the heck... It's Christmas after all.

Product: SX32 Module
Supplier: Eyetech
Price: SX32: £199.95
Keyboard: £34.95
Floppy Drive: £44.95
Contact: 01642 713 85

Hand Holding

If there's one type of present which most people will find boring when they look in the Christmas stocking, it's a book. However, this Amiga book is certainly not boring for those still getting to grips with the machine and I'm sure many people would be delighted to find an Amiga beginners guide at the bottom of the tree, especially Hugh.

As the new boy, he needs to know the basics and with this present, he has a particular treat in store for his Christmas reading. We feel Hugh is destined to become a super techie, but before this happens, I thought I'd give him this to read.

Amiga First Steps for Absolute Beginners is written by one of our regular freelancers, Paul Overaa. He gives a step by step, easy guide to getting to know your Amiga.

The book isn't as technically minded as you might imagine for a very technical computer. It avoids topics such as Shell commands or how to unpack files. It concentrates on simple subjects and contains plenty of illustrations and asks questions like, "Is your Amiga ill?".

Amiga First Steps is perfect for young Amiga users as the book is cleverly illustrated. It uses a large typeface along with huge pictures making it enjoyable while easy to read.

It's certainly a breath of fresh air, especially as the manuals which come with the Amiga are not easy to read and master. For £6.99, this book has to be an excellent stocking filler for a new Amiga user.

Product: Amiga First Steps Book
Supplier: Bookmark Publishing
Price: £6.99
Contact: 01525 713671

Play Time

Well what can I get our lovely editor Tina 'I've got everything under the sun' Hackett, to stay in her good books? Well with the Amiga games scene a little on the quiet side, while PC and console games keep on improving and pushing the boundaries of gaming technology as each day passes, I think a Playstation would be a wise move to keep her occupied over the festive season.

Why a Playstation over the other 'super' consoles? Well Nintendo are far too possessive of their lovely machine and so restrict game development, and then there is the horribly high price of the cartridges it is using.

As for the Saturn, Sega have brought out a couple of outstanding games, but the early releases really showed how much more powerful the Playstation is in comparison, and Playstation games seem to have a greater depth and maturity, probably reflecting the higher average age of Playstation owners.

So for every Amiga owner who wants to try out the best in the current games scene until the Amiga scene picks up, such as the likes of Syndicate Wars, Command and Conquer, Tomb Raider, F1 and Wipeout 2097 go grab yourself a Playstation, it's a darn site easier to fit under your TV than a PC.

Product: Playstation
Supplier/Price: Toys'R'Us - £249.99 plus Worms, Doom, True Pinball, Zero Divide Blockbuster - £199 plus Mortal Kombat 3

Hero Worship

Now onto little Andy Maddock. I have to get him a good present as he is departing us this month to follow the path to rock and roll stardom. The office will not be the same without the monkey strutting pose of Andy as he tries his best to emulate the cheeky young Gallagher brothers. Having a quick rummage through little Andy's CD collection some of his biggest musical influences are The Stone Roses, The Charlatans, The Beatles, Oasis and The Who. While he has been known to attack people playing any music that can be described with words like soft, heavy and rap, you don't get to hear too much of Metallica, Bryan Adams, Foreigner and especially The Fugees.

Out of all of these The Beatles are by far the biggest band ever – in fact they are probably bigger than *Amiga Computing*. Well to show Andy how a successful band career should go I think he needs to watch the Beatles Anthology a good few

times.

If you saw the TV version there is plenty of extra footage not shown on TV such as John Lennon pulling various funny faces and if the price of the full set is a little too much the videos are now going to be available separately.

Product: Beatles Anthology
Supplier: HMV
Price: £99.99

Zippety Doo Da

Gareth is a very busy man who is always on the move and he needs to be able to transfer files to and from work, home and various other jet-setting destinations. At first I was tempted with the very nice Jaz drive, but even though it is very fast and reasonably small it is a little on the expensive side and for Gareth's needs the 1Gb capacity is way beyond what he will ever need.

On the plus side for the Zip drive the extra slimline design makes it perfect for carrying around in a bag or briefcase, and it takes up little desk space when in use. Along with the low price of the 100Mb disks it is economical and convenient to use.

Product: Zip Drive
Supplier: HiSoft
Price: £199
Contact: 01525 718181

Sound Idea

Finally for the new boy here at *Amiga Computing* I think a copy of the latest incarnation of OctaMED Sound Studio will do. Having seemingly been around for as long as the Amiga itself in one form or another OctaMED has progressed into one of the most polished Amiga programs available – amazing if you think that it started off as a public domain tracker around six years ago.

With this latest version giving you up to 64 channels and the option to use either 8 or 16 bit samples, Sound Studio offers some pretty impressive features. If you are not at all keen on the rather confusing standard tracker lay out, Sound Studio has the traditional stave layout, and for owners of a second Amiga two machines can be slaved together over a Midi network.

For anyone with a music fetish then Sound Studio makes the perfect Christmas gift, that is unless you can't stand the sound of Christmas carols for a month.

Product: OctaMED Sound Studio
Supplier: RBF Software
Price: UK: £40 ROW: £55
Contact: 01703 785680

Hugh scrimps and saves for some Christmas delights.....

Clean Up Your Act

Let's start with the cheap ones...I'm going to give Gareth this rather groovy little vacuum cleaner so that he can clean his mucky looking keyboard and (most importantly) make lots of rude noises by pressing it against his cheek, providing us in the office with hours of festive fun.

This unusual computer accessory is produced by a company called Jessop, and although it looks like it belongs to a house proud Action Man, it is designed to clean those grubby but tricky to reach parts of your computer.

The vacuum comes with a bottle of odd looking liquid, some handy wipes and a bag full of cotton buds. At a mere £9.99, this classy computer accessory is an absolute bargain. .

Product: Mini Vacuum
Price: £9.99
Supplier: Jessop
Contact: 0116 232 0033

Old Classics

Second up is a gift that would brighten any body's Christmas. This fantastic gift is going to Andy, because after years of reviewing all the latest Amiga games I think a bit of a retro gaming experience would brighten his Christmas. The Epic Speccy 1996 CD is a monster compilation of 3,000 games from the days when the ultimate experience was steering a large, slightly scary looking blue blob down a hill on skis (or am I just a big girlie la la?).

Despite the fact that these games date from the days when computers had the processing power of a calculator, they are all stupidly addictive and probably more playable than quite a few of the modern releases.

Another great strength of all these games are that they are pretty easy to get the hang of. Daley Thompson's Decathlon for example, involves smacking two keys on the keyboard until you either develop RSI, destroy your keyboard or win the race.

Product: Speccy CD
Price: £17.99
Supplier: Epic Marketing
Contact: 0500 131 486, or e-mail epiv@epma.demon.co.uk.

Blast Away

The next present is a little bit more expensive. I know Neil will fully appreciate these because they will make his monstrous towering computer terminal look even larger and more impressive.

As you may know, monitor speakers don't exactly make your eyeballs rattle in their sockets with pure heavy bass. These Goodman 80 Watt speakers really do improve the sound quality of your computer by a pretty impressive degree.

Although not costing a great deal more than the average add-on multimedia computer speaker, these provide significantly more power and sound quality. The only draw back is the fact that they aren't actually shielded, so it wouldn't be a good idea to put them too close to your monitor.

Product: Goodmans Speakers
Price: £59.99
Supplier/Contact: Argos

Film Star

Tina just loves having her photo taken and does have aspirations towards being a film star (*yeah right - Ed*), so this little gizmo is right up her street. Up until now the Connectix Corporation QuickCam could only be used on a PC or Mac, but the Omnilink Corporation has just developed the AQCVid interface so Amiga users don't have to miss out on the fun.

Despite its odd shape, the QuickCam is an impressive piece of technology and with the AQCVid, Amiga users can have a go at all kinds of new things. Depending on the speed of your computer, it can be used to take pictures or shoot videos and transfer them to your computer or web site.

Just think of the possibilities of this little device - you could make your own movies, send multimedia greetings cards or enhance photos. Just think, now all those excruciatingly embarrassing photographs of Uncle Barney and Aunt Mabel getting sloshed on Boxing Day can be posted onto the Internet and viewed by millions!

Product: AQCVid - Amiga Interface for use with QuickCam
Price: $59.99
Supplier: OmniLink Corp
Contact: http://www.connectix.com/ AC





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From M62East Join M1 From the M1 follow signs onto M621. Take A643 Elland Rd turnoff from M621. Follow signs for A58. This merges with the Armley gyratory From M62West Junction 27, A62 to Armley gyratory. From the A1 take the turnoff for A64. This merges with the A58 (by-passing town centre) which meets Armley gyratory.

Hardware

Still Going Strong
Amiga A1200 MagicPack
Includes, Wordworth V4SE, Datastore, Organiser, Turbocalc 3.5, Personal Paint V6.4, Photogenics 1.2SE, Pinball Mania & Whizz.
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Includes same software pack as Magic Pack, But also includes Scala MM300(Req. 4Mb).
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AMIGA *M1438S* Monitor Only!! *£259.99 When bought with a computer

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- A1200 dust cover
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- 1.2 Gig SCSI Hard Drive
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RENO Portable CD ROM Only...£99.99 Req. SCSI controller
- SCSI-2 connector
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Quick & easy to install, very fast.

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Toshiba drives are shorter than other SCSI CD-ROM drives & so fit inside the A4000 Desktop case.

SCSI Controllers

Squirrel SCSI-II Interface	*£45.00
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Surf Squirrel SCSI-II Interface	*£79.99
GVP 4008+ / Oktagon SCSI controllers	£99.99

SCSI-II/RAM Interface cards for big box Amiga's, A4000/A2000 etc.

Hard Drives

3.5" Hard Disk Drives

IDE		SCSI	
540Mb..	£117.99	1.08Gig.	£235.99
850Mb..	£120.99	2.1 Gig.	£345.99
1.08Gig.	£152.99	4.3 Gig.	£797.99
2.1 Gig.	£249.99	9.1 Gig.	£1599.99

External Hard Drives for all SCSI aware Amiga's
810Mb £239.99 1.2Gig £314.99
Inc. High quality SCSI-II Quantum mechanism with a 10ms access time, Internal PSU, SCSI ID selector, Cooling fan, and HD prepping/partitioning software.
Requires SCSI interface, ie. Squirrel/GVP additional adaptor may be req. @ £15.95

2.5" Hard Drives for A600/A1200 with installation kit
inc. software, screws, cables and instructions

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340Mb.	£129.99	540Mb.	£169.99
810Mb.	£214.99	1.0Gig.	£299.99

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- Includes:-
- 1 X 100Mb cartridge
- An adaptor may be req. at an extra cost of £15.99.

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Squirrel I/face



Surf Squirrel
- Hi speed serial port
- SCSI-II interface
- Autobooting HD

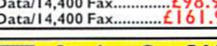
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A1200 4 MB RAM	£89.99
A1200 8 MB RAM	£109.99
A1200 1MB/33Mhz Co Pro	£99.99
A1200 2 MB/33Mhz Co Pro	£109.99
A1200 4 MB/33Mhz Co Pro	£124.99
A1200 8 MB/33Mhz Co Pro	£139.99

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Up to 128Mb RAM, FPU Socket & R/T clock
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PRIMA A500 512k RAM no clock	£19.99
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Part exchange available on your old memory.

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Portable mono printer, 30 page ASF built in.	
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Stylus 200 Colour	£169.99
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Stylus 500 Colour	£253.99
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Epson LQ100+	£107.99
24 Pin Dot Matrix.	

star MICRONICS

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Star LC240 24 pin mono	£93.99
192 cps draft, with ASF built in.	
Star LC240C 24 pin Col.	£108.99
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Printer Stands (Universal)	£4.99
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"If you want to get the best possible results from your printer, get a copy of Studio".
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Star LC10/100 mono	£3.69
Star LC10/100 colour	£7.99
Star LC240c colour	£13.99
Star LC240c mono	£8.99
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Hewlett Packard Laserjet 4L	£68.99
H. Packard L.jet 4/M/5/M/N	£99.99
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Laser printer supplies for all major manufacturers available......Call.

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Canon BJ200/230	£18.99
Canon BJ30 (3 pack)	£12.99
Canon BJC 70 mono (3 pack)	£10.99
Canon BJC 70 colour (3 pack)	£17.99
Canon BJC 4000 colour (single)	£16.99
Canon BJC 4000 mono (single)	£6.99
Canon BJC 4000 mono high cap.	£28.99
Canon BJC 600e mono high cap.	£8.49
Canon BJC 600e colour	£7.99
Citizen Printiva Std. colours	£6.49
Citizen Printiva Metallic colours	£16.49
HP. Deskjet 500/550 Mono	£22.99
HP. Deskjet 500/550 Colour	£24.99
HP.Deskjet 660 double mono	£23.99
HP.Deskjet 660 colour	£25.99
Epson Stylus mono	£13.99
Epson Stylus colour	£27.99
Epson Stylus Col. II/S/820 Mono	£17.99
Epson Stylus Col. II/S/820 Colour	£24.99
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Colour Real Time Amiga video capture system
- Composite & SVHS inputs.
- Time Lapse remote grabbing.
- BMP,TIFF & PCX File Support.
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- 400 dpi optical scan resolution
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All in one package
Integrated Package
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- Any Amiga 2.04 or higher
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Relational Database
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This CD contains all the materials needed to develop software for the Amiga. From Amiga Technologies comes the complete Amiga Developers Tools and Documentation.

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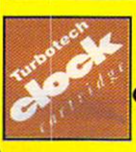
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TurboTech Real-Time Clock Cartridge
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Vista Pro Lite
Requires 2Mb of Ram & Hard Disk With Kickstart 2.04 or above.
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Limited Offer

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Our range of *Amiga Tower Systems* will further enhance the specification of your Amiga. They benefit from quality metal construction and full height with dimensions of 660mmx190mmx430 mm.

There are 6 x 5¼" bays and 5 x 3½" bays. All of the 5¼" bays and two of the 3½" bays are accessible externally. Available for A4000, A3000 and A1200.

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When fitted in one of our Towers, the *Shuttle 4000 PCI* expands the desktop A4000 with further Zorro, Video and PCI/ISA slots. The PCI slots allow the use of our *Pentium* processor board to take advantage of both computers in one Tower.

- 7 x Zorro III Slots (5 DMA Buster)
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- 3 x PC ISA Slots
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Shuttle 4000 PCI £189.95

Bundle 4000PCI System :

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AWeb-II uses extensive internal multithreading, which gives the program asynchronous, parallel network access. Images are starting to load before the document is finished. It is possible to follow a link while the document is still loading. A separate network status window shows all pending network and local file accesses. All network accesses can be interrupted immediately. The HTML-2 standard is fully supported, including forms. Many HTML-3.2 features are also supported, like backgrounds and centring. AWeb supports the use of proxies for HTTP, FTP, Gopher and Telnet. The HTTP and Gopher protocols are supported internally. By using external programs, FTP, Mailto, Telnet and News can also be used. AWeb lets you load all images, delay all image loading, or load only clickable maps and delay other images. For delayed images, the ALT text is displayed. Transparent GIFs are supported. The 24 bit picture datatype (picturedtV43) is supported. To improve network speed, host names and network addresses are cached so addresses are looked up only once during a session. AWeb can open it's windows on the default public screen, a named public screen or open its own screen. You can keep your favourite links in a hierarchical hotlist. You can add, delete, move or group links in a special hotlist requester. In extension to its own hotlist, AWeb can read other hotlists, like those of AMosaic. AWeb has a configurable ARexx menu with keyboard shortcuts so you can start any useful ARexx macro easily. An advanced settings requester is integrated in the program. AWeb has an ARexx interface, and a unique and powerful shell command interface. *AWeb-II requires : Workbench / Kickstart 3.0+, Approx.3 MB of hard disk space for the software, and 5-10 MB of free space for disk caching, At least 2 Mb RAM, 1 Mb chip RAM, A working TCP/IP stack (AmiTCP), appropriate GIF, JPEG, JFIF, 24bit datatypes.*

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A sackload of mail was dumped on Ezra's desk once again. This month we have comments on the Amiga's past as a games machine and also what software developers should really be doing.



NOT A GAMES MACHINE

What IS the world coming to? I just read an article in the latest issue of one of the US's major video gaming magazines, it talks about how the Apple Macintosh wants to become a gaming machine. For the life of me I thought that computer manufacturers did not want their machines referred to as game machines, except for those dedicated consoles.

What is happening? The Amiga lost its respect as a serious platform when it was called a game machine. Now the Apple clan wants the title that the 'Wintel' crowd has taken for its own. The article also talked about the new Macs (Power Macs) that use the PowerPC processor which proved to be just as fast, if not in some cases faster, than many in Intel's line. (As a side note, the new 225 MHz PowerPC 604e has been benchmarked faster than the 200 MHz Pentium Pro.)

As I have written before a PowerPC in an ECS, or better yet an AGA, Amiga would show just how fast an Amiga can be. I also read Microsoft is planning to come out with a "stripped" version of its Windows operating system for the industries new $500 PC. Uh, excuse me but I have already seen a $500 personal computer with a very effective operating system that does not take an entire hard drive hostage and at the same time steal just about all of the machines system RAM. If I am not mistaken it is called Amiga.

I would really like to know were they get-off in thinking that all personal computers cost that of a DEC Alpha or SGI. But back to the processor thing. I got information from Motorola's official Web site about the features of the current most powerful processor for the Amiga – the 68060. As quoted from the Web site, the MC68060 processor has "superscalar implementation...executes three instructions per clock...dual 8-kbyte on-chip caches". Correct me if I am wrong, but are these not Pentium and PowerPC features.

Why is it that the Amiga community has a competitive processor for our machines of choice but is so slow in marketing software to take advantage of it. I'll admit the only thing that the '060 is limited to is its clock speed. For it to really be a threat to the competition, the clock would have to double to 100 or triple to 150. That will never happen, but just think what '060 compiled software could do for the Amiga. We could see: faster full screen, full motion, full colour, animations; competitive rendering times (i.e. LightWave, Imagine, Real 3D, Caligari (trueSpace?); and cleaner, faster video (i.e. Toaster/Flyer, Broadcast 32, V-Lab Motion). What I would like to see is a host of "real" VR games that takes advantage of the '060, or even the '040 processing features, that fully uses the custom chip set and that can go nose to nose with the likes of Doom, Virtua Fighter, Descent, Tomb Raider, Mechwarrior, Virtural ON and so on.

We could REALLY see an industry revival of the re-arrival with a Power Amiga or at least with programs written with the 68060 in mind.

LeRoy Parham, Jr.
Clinton, Maryland
USA

Reply: Yes, it's true that at the time the Amiga did lose a lot of respect when it was labelled a games machine. Over time though, it certainly proved itself to be a lot more than this. As readers of this magazine have discovered, the Amiga is an excellent graphics platform and remains unbeaten as a true, cost effective multimedia machine.

However looking at the state of the Amiga games market now, it would be nice if we could claim even a fifth of this title. It's unfortunate that this is the situation and apart from the likes of Vulcan and a few others, we certainly can't claim it as a games machine - it's up to us to show the many other areas it excels in.

As for a $500 PC, well yes this is what the Amiga is - a low-cost PC. However, when it was brought back on to the market it was considerably more expensive than this - and even then you had to buy the monitor. So, it all depends on how this cheap PC comes bundled I suppose.

As you also point out we need developers to make software that shows off the Amiga to its full.

Something you want to get off your chest? Why not write in to ESP, Amiga Computing, IDG Media, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 4NP. Or even better - send it in on a disk, saves my poor fingers, you know. You can even Email us at esp@amigacomp.demon.co.uk

MISSING AMIGA

I've been an Amiga fan since the first days of the AMIGA 500. I personally owned and own an A500, A3000 and A2000 with different upgrades, in hardware and software. I also used the A4000 and A1200 very often in business.

I worked for a small but successful company called X-MOTION. This company is based in Uruguay. There we used the Amiga platform for creating animations with Lightwave and Imagine for TV broadcast. We were also one of the first, if not the only ones, to struggle with the software on the first stages. But it improved with every upgrade.

Like every other Amiganoid, we got stuck in the infamous chaos of the Commodore liquidation. We saw time pass and developers of software and hardware migrate to other platforms, seeking stability. I'm not saying it's wrong, but it is sad. We also saw the price of Amiga machines rocket. So we were forced to buy a DEC Alpha and Lightwave 4.0 for DEC Alpha so we could continue with our work.

OK, to the point. I had to migrate to the PC platform and miss the freshness and friendliness of the Amiga environment.

Bazar del Cafe

MULTIMEDIA WORRIES

Here I am with two A500's, one A3000/16 and a beefed up A2500. My old A2500 is in a Bomac tower with a CSA Magnum 40 (33Mhz), 1 Meg Chip RAM, 22 Meg Fast RAM, Picasso II with 2 Meg RAM, Bridgeboard (don't use the damn thing), Video Toaster 2.0, NEC 6X Fast SCSI 2, Multisync (old) monitor, HP680C printer, USR Robotics V.everything modem and I am probably forgetting a few things.

I started out with an A1000 in 1986 and have been one of the fanatical Amiga supporters that IBM and MAC users complain about. I have upgraded several times and it was only recently that the IBM world started to be able to do things faster than my Amiga. With the possibility of the Amiga OS on a Power PC, I got very excited until I started to think about where the real voids are in the Amiga realm. It is in the Multimedia CD-ROM department.

Here we are with the world's first multimedia computer and the top rated CD-ROM is a collection of shareware programs. Ladies and gentlemen, that is a very, very sad commentary of the state of the machine we love. For months now I have been shopping around for the IBM compatible that would fit my needs. I can get the best "bang for the buck" with a Micron 133 but I can't seem to force myself to buy one. I have used WIN95 at work and at friends' houses and the more I use it the more I dislike it. The other day I saw a MAC 6400 with a 603e running at 180 Mhz and I want to tell you that I was IMPRESSED!.

I am looking for a store that stocks the 604 chip to see what it is like. Now you ask, why not wait until the Power PC Amiga comes out? Well, there is still the problem that the Amiga is not going to be supported by the software companies in the multimedia world. I am not going to sell my beefed up Amiga (it's part of the family) but I suspect that eventually it is going to end up collecting dust with the rest of my collection of Amigas.

Brian Houx
Ogden, Utah

Reply: Okay, the multimedia CD-ROM market has hardly wowed people. That could change though with more developers working on CD. However, on the multimedia side of things, companies like Scala have shown what can be done on the Amiga but it is disheartening admittedly, to see so few releases showing off the multimedia capabilities of the Amiga on a CD-ROM.

ROLL UP, ROLL UP

Come on, write in, you know you want to. The address as per usual is ESP, Amiga Computing, IDG Media, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP. Doesn't matter what format you choose - sweaty sock and Tipp-Ex (that's Neil's particular fetish), traditional biro and paper or a disk (saves my fingers) which we can return. Alternatively, e-mail us at ESP@acomp.demon.co.uk. At the moment we're lining up some software goodies for a lucky reader who writes in with the best letter.

ART LESSONS

Since embarking on my Fine Arts course at Manchester University I have become disillusioned with my normal artistic mediums such as paints and canvas. In the last few months I have become increasingly interested in exploring the possibilities of using computers for my work.

Obviously, as I am a student, I do not have much money to spend so I am strongly tempted to buy an Amiga. This where I need your help.

Firstly, which Amiga represents the best value for money, considering I need a fairly sophisticated machine. I also need a computer that can be linked up to scanners, printers and the like. Would you recommend the lower spec computers such as the Amiga 500 or would my computer have to be a high end machine such as an Amiga 4000? Secondly, which software graphics packages would suit my work the best? Your advice would be much appreciated

Alex Shannon

Reply: Fortunately Alex you should be able to get hold of an Amiga that suits your requirements fairly easily. A second hand Amiga 2000 with a graphics card would be ideal. As for the graphics package, Almathera's Photogenics is probably your best bet. As luck would have it Photogenics was our cover disk for last months Amiga Computing, so write in and get hold of one of our back issues.

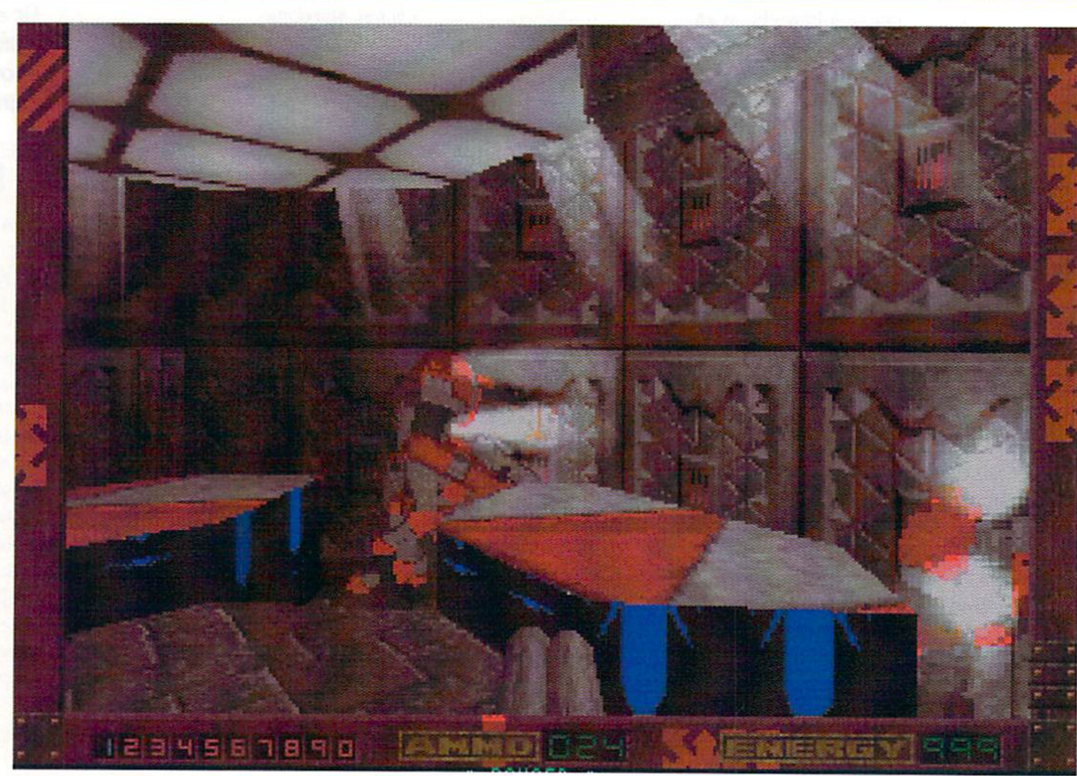
BREEDING TIME

At last a real review of AB3DII. Yes, I agree entirely. The trouble is I have pinned so much hope on this game that when it finally arrived I was disappointed. I now feel that because Amiga games development is almost at a standstill it has to be a fond farewell to my machine. What a bitch. Perhaps Breathless 2 will be worth the wait?

Is there any point in hanging on? Does anyone want an A1200/040 in a nice tower? No, didn't think so; after all, it doesn't play Decent or Z does it? Do I sound depressed at all?

Ray Niblock

Reply: Oh dear, you are on a bit of a downer aren't you? We were disappointed too but felt we had to give it an honest review despite it not living up to our expectations. But don't despair, there are some new games on the horizon. Not heard of a Breathless 2 yet but there is a new 3D shoot-'em-up from Vulcan coming up. In the meantime you could always get the best from your Amiga in other ways such as music, graphics and so on.



Alien Breed 3DII was disappointing. Let's hope something will be along soon to redress the balance

REVOLUTION

I've seen people moan on the newsgroups and in magazines that their machine is dead, but they are wrong. Look at the new software developers and publishers who have been bringing us games now. Look at Andy Davidson who brought us Worms, his game is known by users all over the world for being the most original. He's now bringing us Worms: The Directors Cut and Worms 2.

Then take a look at Breathless which brought us a new look at games with 1*1 pixel. This game could be said to have started a revolution in the Amiga games industry, it showed us there was a lot more yet to be discovered about the Amiga. This revolution has continued on with AB3D 2 and will soon be continued by Burnout form Vulcan Software.

Last year there were no CD-ROM games for the Amiga but look now and you find they are on their way with Demistar, Kang Fu and we could even have had Myst. Some of us have seen the demo. From what I have learnt, a man from Poland made it even though he hadn't got permission. But he proved to us that it could be done - that a game which got so many awards and attention from the press could be made for the Amiga.

That guy deserves a pat on the back, it's just a pity that companies wouldn't look at his discovery instead of pulling legal action. Companies have not looked at the Amiga in the right way. All they see is an old computer that's had it's hay day and nothing more can be made on it. But they are wrong - many games can be converted for the Amiga. All it needs is for people like that Polish guy to prove it. If he had not made the demo of Myst and we asked them to make it, they would have simply said it can't be done as the Amiga hasn't the power to run it. He had the right idea and even though it's illegal it could help save us.

I hope, like many others, that Myst comes to us. Think of the repercussions - other companies would see a well known company bringing a game of such high quality to a machine they had written off. We should tell other software companies – if Cyan can make Myst then they should be able to make such and such. This is an opportunity not to be missed – e-mail them and tell them you'll buy their game.

Looking through my present issues of Amiga magazines, I can see a new generation of games developers. Some might say the games aren't all that good, but just imagine what they'll be able to do in time to come. Vulcan Software have proved this - its first ever game was Valhalla which many magazines didn't like. But look at what they're going to bring us now – six new titles of a brilliant standard.

These are the type of people and companies we should cherish and not discount them at their first shot at making a game. They are what is keeping the Amiga alive and they are the future. If we brush them aside we have no chance.

Due to the lack of games, people have been expanding their Amiga to it's full. People like you and me have been buying accelerators with extra memory, CD-ROM drives and modems. No wonder games sales have been low - we have spent a lot of money upgrading our machines pushing the spec of games up. We should be proud of what we have achieved, accelerators are now cheaper meaning more people are expanding.

I've had enough of people saying my machine is dead. Dead means without life, but I can tell you without hesitation that there is life in the Amiga. If you want to be negative then do it somewhere else, not in the newsgroups and not in the magazines.

We have a future with so many companies wanting to make Amiga's, it can only be a good thing. With Escom dead and the shops up for sale, rumour is Anglo Corporation (which helps to distribute Amiga's in the UK) could buy their shops – this is a good sign. I've also heard that other retailers have bought the Amiga stock and are now selling thousands in the UK. I can't confirm this but I hope it's true.

We must not sit back, we should be telling software and hardware companies what we want. We should not be leaving it to everyone else - make time. I personally e-mailed a games developer and gave him my support and he e-mailed me back thanking me. You can make a difference so don't become a part of the problem by moaning your machine is dead, look at all the positive things that have happened and are still to come. I hope people will agree with me.

Philip



Andy Davidson developed Worms on the Amiga - other platforms soon followed suit

Reply: Yes, Anglo Corporation have bought the Escom chain and the shops will be re-launched as Silica shops. As far as we know they will be concentrating on PC's as well as stocking Playstation hardware and software - as far as Amiga goes, no comment has been made. In a future issue though, we will be looking at the availability of Amiga's and sales at retail.

As far as the Myst demo goes, it was pretty impressive to see it on the Amiga and let's just hope it could persuade other developers that our machine is powerful enough to do such things. This is only the first hurdle though, they then have to be persuaded that their efforts will be rewarded with sales. So if they get lots of e-mails..



If you prefer, you can send us your letter via Email. Simply point your mailer to: ESP@acomp.demon.co.uk. You could even send it in on a disk – it makes our lives easier too. Someone has to type this lot in you know!

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acas

amiga computing advice service

Being the soft belly of a good woman at the end of a hard day, ACAS will make all you problems drift away

STALLED CD

When I turn my system on it stalls. If I set my HD to game and let my CD Drive go through its startup, switch to auto boot and then soft-reset via Amiga/Amiga/Ctrl, my system will recognise my CD after a mount command.

What I want to do is switch my system on and if I decide to use a CD, for it to come up on my Workbench screen, like if I inserted a disk in DF0, is this possible?

John Molden, Cheshire

Thanks for sending a copy of your startup sequence and user startup along with the details of your Amiga set up, it does make my job a lot easier when I know exactly how a machine is set up. If any one else is going to submit questions to ACAS please take note!

Normally extra hardware, such as CD-ROMs, are added to the Amiga via a DOS driver, which is what I assume you have on your Workbench screen. These usually reside in the DEVS:DOSdrivers drawer and are automatically mounted by the startup sequence. This would normally result in a properly mounted CD drive, where you put a CD into your CD-ROM and the disk icon appears on the Workbench. You should try moving the CD0 icon in this drawer and hopefully you will get the CD-ROM working as you want it to. I used to use the Zappo CD-ROM and this caused the startup to stall, but this was a fault of the software and really the AsimCDFS software you are using is very good and should not cause a stall at all.

POOR PICT

I decided to try this new Datatypes, but when I boot my computer there is no text on the Workbench icons or menus and if I try opening a drawer I get no borders on the window.

Programs run fine, only the initial Workbench screen is affected. I traced the bug to the picture Datatype and ILBM Datatype. Once I restored the old file my Workbench boots fine.

The only fix I have been able to find is to have a preset of the screen mode that is just a little different. Just enough to make the screen to reset, for example, my screen mode is Super72 910x600 (save) and I changed it to 900x600 (preset). The text and the borders come back to normal.

I tried putting my preset screen mode in the WBStartup drawer, but it didn't help, reset must be done after boot is completed. Any help would be appreciated.

J.A.Ospina, javiero@village.ios.com

I'm afraid you are just going to have to put up with the problem. The PictDT software is still only in the early beta testing stage and has a long way to go before it is running perfectly, particularly on plain AGA systems.

The problem you describe is similar to a recurring problem I have noticed on Amigas using the normal picture Datatype, where the Workbench backdrop picture is not drawn in properly and a ResetWB is required. I do not know if the two are connected but it's possible. Currently there is no real advantage with using the new 24 bit Datatype except with iBrowse and AWeb where it improves colour.



Not impressed with iBrowse image decoding? The version 43 picture datatype could help

STODGY FTP

I have recently connected to the Internet and am finding the Amiga to be more than capable of accessing most of the net's features, unfortunately I am having trouble downloading software from FTP sites such as the Aminet.

My system is a 10 Meg A1200 with a Viper II 030 accelerator. I am using a 28,800 modem with a serial speed setting of 57600. I use AmiTCP and amFTP for file transfer, although I get the same problem using IBrowse for FTP operations.

When I start to download anything the initial on screen display shows a transfer rate of about 1500 cps, but after a few seconds all the SD/RD lights on my modem stop flashing and the system just hangs for a long while before giving me another small block of data.

Eventually I end up with a transfer speed of between 50-100 cps, which even with my very limited knowledge of comms, seems very slow

I have tried downloading from various Aminet sites, locally and overseas, but the problem is always the same. Hoping that you can help me with this problem!

Trev Dawson, tdawson@enterprise.net

I can think of two probable reasons you are having such problems with your transfer speeds. Firstly you can try lowering the speed of your serial transfer from 57,600 to say 31,250 or even 9,600. If transfer speed improves it could be that you have a problem with a bad serial cable or poor telephone line and transferring at too high a speed means that the line speed drops a lot, lowering the transfer speed can help this situation.

Another possible reason is that your ISP could be over subscribed and its servers cannot cope with the demand, resulting in slow speeds. In my experience, slow transfer speed is down to accessing slow sites, the ISP playing up or simply a bad connection between your machine and the remote site.

NO NET

I have been a regular reader of your magazine since early 1993. Recently I have not been able to purchase your magazine, simply because I couldn't find it anywhere in Doncaster, so I had to make do with AUI. Eventually, my newsagent was able to order it for me and I can read it once again. Anyway, on to my main points:

1. I have an Amiga 1200 with a Connor 85MB hard drive. Recently, I started to write an AmigaGuide file for beginners on the Internet to put in the Public Domain. Reading so much about it, I know how to set up an Amiga to get on the 'net, even though I don't have it myself (parental problems - they won't let me!). In helping me with this, I have used an article from your May 1995 magazine in which Frank Nord revealed how to get the AmiTCP installation from ftp.demon.co.uk.

He talks about downloading it from Demon's FTP server but how can you download it if you haven't got AmiTCP in the first place? Do you get something from Demon when you subscribe to them that allows you to download things? Does he mean that you have to download them on a friends machine? When talks about downloading things, he tells you to link up, etc., and then tells you to type "ncftp ftp.demon.co.uk".

Is ncftp part of AmiTCP? If not, where does it come from? I am assuming you must get something from Demon when you subscribe, or it is a Catch-22 situation. You need to download things, but you can't until you have downloaded AmiTCP, but you can't download anything...etc.

2. In your screen shots of Workbench-based programs, the windows have different close, etc. gadgets than mine do. Is it something to do with the fact that I only have Kickstart 3?

3. Can you recommend any good books about the Amiga and the Internet that will help me? The local library in Doncaster is about as much use as a chocolate fireguard in the Sahara desert. They either think the Amiga doesn't exist or think it can't handle the 'net.

4. When I had my ZX Spectrum +2A a few years back, I had a game called Turbo Esprit. It involved riding the around streets in your car, looking for the bad guys. I saw it at a car boot sale when I was on holiday (pirated, of course), but didn't buy it. I still have the original Spectrum tape, but it won't load through the emulator I have. It used to, but even then it was as slow as a Lada trying to climb Everest. I would be very grateful if you could give me some information regarding this game.

5. My last question. My parents won't let me get the Internet, because they say it is too

APOLLO ACCELERATORS

Reading your review on the Apollo accelerators (issue 104 page 40/41), I have a few questions.

1. The review is mostly focusing on speed and bench marking. In my humble opinion one 060 accelerator is just as fast as the next. They all use the same processor, or am I missing something here?

2. In your review you mention 'A problem with programs that use a lot of floating point operations'. What kind of problems are we dealing with here? Have you tested the 060 board on programs like LightWave, Real 3-D or World Construction Set? What are the results? Any problems occurred like instability or render errors?

3. I know that when you buy an 060 board from Phase5, a patcher program is supplied with the board. Why is this not the case with the Apollo 060? Is this a matter of superior design or an omission? Will the patcher program from Phase5 work with an Apollo board or again, is it not needed?

4. Several 'exotic' boards (both accelerators and graphic cards) need a revision 11 Buster chip. Could you please explain what this chip does? And why is the Buster rev 11 mentioned in the requirements box in 'the bottom line' section of your reviews? I know that in many A4000 you will find a rev 9 Buster, which could be the cause of some problems. I do hope you can help me out here, kind regards and keep up the excellent work!

Robert den Broeder,
robert.den.broeder@tip.nl

1. Theoretically the design of the board will play a part in how fast the 060 can run, depending on how good memory access and if there was any secondary cache, but the Apollo and Blizzard boards both seem to run at identical speed.

2. The problem with the 060 is that a number of the floating point commands have been removed from the built in FPU. To keep the processor compatible a number of traps have been implemented so when the processor comes across one of these commands it has to stop what it is doing clear all the of its cache and run the trap, before continuing on as normal. As one of the biggest reasons for the 060's speed increase is it pipeline and cache this completely cripples the processor, making it run as slowly as a 68000. No instability occurs just quiet a bit of frustration.

expensive. They say I won't always have a paper round to pay for it. My mum says that when I leave home I can get it then, but I am worried that by then the Internet will either have gone out of fashion or become too expensive.

My dad says no because he says he has read about what is on the Internet. He says it is full of dirty pictures, which you and I know is untrue. It may have somewhere, but not to the extent that I would say "It is full of it".

Please, please, please can you give me any ideas on trying to persuade them to let me have it? I have tried every thing I can think of: It is educational, it has masses of information on it, you can get my favourite team on it (Middlesbrough), it has news groups on about everything that you can think of, you can get free programs from it. You can even get your excellent magazine on it!

Anyway, keep up the good work. I like the new logos inside the magazine, etc. It really is a good read. AC is simply the best.
Andy Smith, Doncaster

Well I'm glad you managed to find Amiga Computing again, the best way to be sure of getting the best written Amiga magazine every month is to subscribe. For other people having trouble finding Amiga Computing, well you probably won't be reading this then.

1. First off, AmiTCP is a commercial product available from Blittersoft, the versions found on Aminet and in the installer at Demon's FTP site are demo versions. So a few potential none Internet sources are the Aminet CDs and I'm sure a PD house could furnish you with a demo copy of AmiTCP v4.3. The advantage of the full version is that you get a full manual.

When you first join Demon they do provide Amiga owners with an install disk that has AmigaNOS along with a mail, news and FTP package. Once installed this would allow you to access the Internet.

Ncftp is a shell based FTP client that comes with AmiTCP. FTP stands for file transfer protocol and allows you to access directories and files on another computer connected to the Internet that has been set up as a FTP server. Typing "ncftp ftp.demon.co.uk" runs ncftp which sends a message to Demon's FTP server asking for access.

People using an ISP that does not support the Amiga will have to get hold of the TCP/IP software that allows you to access the Internet another way.

2. The 3-D style gadgets and sliders on our Workbench screen and windows are put there by the extremely nice Workbench enhancer MCP. The latest version was on the November cover disk and allows you to change the look of the Amiga's standard gadgets.

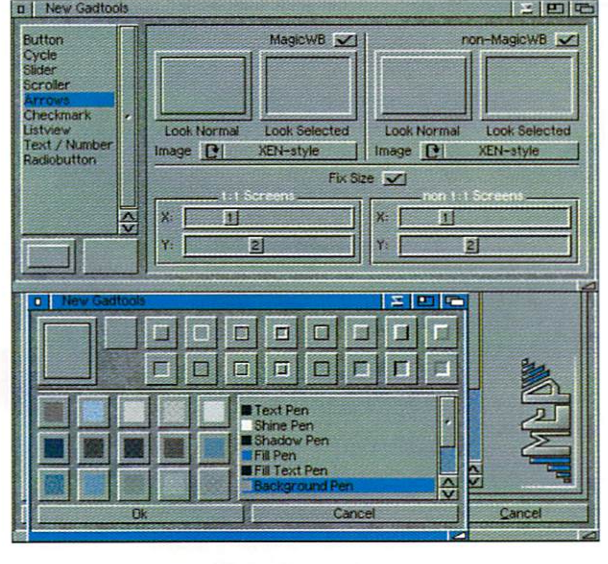
3. The Amiga Surfin' is a good introduction to the Internet, and if you are looking for helping installing AmiTCP in issue 99 Neil Mohr did a five page step by step guide to setting AmiTCP up.

4. On the speed side of things, using a Spectrum emulator on a A1200 requires at least some fast memory to get it running at a reasonable speed. If you have a 28Mhz 020 accelerator the emulator runs at full speed.

I do agree that if any game needs a modern revamp then Turbo Esprit is the one. Using the ZXAM I have also had problems trying to get Turbo Esprit to run, but on the last Speccy Sensation 2 CD there was a version on there that ran fine.

5. I'm not sure if I will be able to help you out here. True enough the Internet provides many great advantages. E-mail is a invaluable tool and the World Wide Web is a great way to find out all the latest news and get in touch with companies, people and even us. Along with the older uses such as FTP and IRC that give you access to a huge number of programs and allowing you to talk to people all over the world.

On the cost side of things the ISP charges at Demon are £10 a month, and then on top of that you have your Bob Hoskins charges



Sadly flawed, the 060 is wonderful in general use but fails with certain floating point operations

3. With any 060 board you buy you will be given a disk on which there is a new 68040 and 680060 Amiga library. These are there to adjust certain parts of the operating system to work correctly with the 040 and 060 processors. In fact the 68040 library you get is just a patch that redirects calls made to the original 68040 library to the new 68060 library.

With the Phase5 board the Cyberpatcher program tries its best to remove instructions that the 060 does not like from programs that are run. This results in most programs that have problems running on the 060 working correctly, these include Mand2000, SceneryAnimator, Imagine, Vista Pro, LightWave, Real 3d and Cinema 4D. The reason other boards do not come with such a program is that one has not been written and not that the boards are any better and is one real advantage the Phase5 boards have

The Cyberpatcher program does work with these other boards but you do not get anywhere near the speed increase you do with the Phase5 board, more than likely due to it using the Phase5 specific 68060 library.

4. As far as I know the buster chip handles memory access and I think, the Zorro III buses. The revision 9 chip had a few bugs in it that can cause you machine to become *very* unstable when used with a Zorro board that effects these bugs and so you need the bug free revision 11 chip before you can use these boards.



Do you have a problem? Do you sometimes find yourself poised over your Amiga with axe in hand, spouting profanity at the stubborn refusal of your software or hardware to behave in the coreect manner?

Well, calm down and swap the axe for pen and paper, jot down your problems, along with a description of your Amiga setup, and send it off to Amiga Computing Advice Service, IDG Media, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. Alternatively you can e-mail us at ACAS@acomp.demon.co.uk

Artistic Ambition

Tina Hackett takes a sneak preview of the forthcoming structured drawing program, DrawStudio from LH Publishing

Whether you can draw or not, this latest package from developers Andy and Graham Dean aims to cater for both artists and novices alike. If the names sound familiar you may remember they were the chaps behind the successful program, ImageStudio.

So after a year in development, what exciting new features can we look forward to in this program? According to LH Publishing, DrawStudio is capable of using structured and bitmap elements which enable you to create pictures with both elements and either print them out or save them as EPS' to use with other programs.

DrawStudio aims to be intuitive to use and the developers have incorporated MUI as their chosen interface. It will include a version of MUI ready to install with the program. DrawStudio works with both AGA and ECS Amigas, however AGA owners will be able to view images in 256 colour.

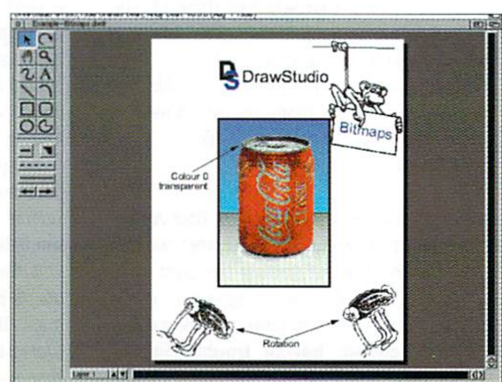
The program has many tools for the budding artist to create masterpieces with. Polygons, Bezier Curves and Text buttons allow simple creation of the image you want. The picture will start to take on some real shape though with the use of Fills. You can 'Outline' your picture using lines of various thickness (measured in line weight points) and choose the colour of the line. The package will allow you to shade the picture either with a transparent colour, a block of colour, patterns, a gradient or a bitmap fill.

What looks particularly innovative at this stage is that you can use transparent colours - something which previously has only been done in paint packages like Deluxe Paint and not drawing programs.

DrawStudio will also be capable of special effects such as warping, whether using the predefined effects or the envelope where you can mould the object with the mouse. The developers also tell us that the program will have a unique layers feature, where separate layers can be hidden or greyed out while you draw on other layers.

The complete version should be ready in a few weeks and available either on floppy disk (£59.95) or CD (£79.95). In the meantime though, if you fancy trying it out now, simply turn to our coverdisk.

Contact: LH Publishing, 01908 370230



DrawStudio uses a MUI based interface for ease of use

Christmas Cheer

Full of festive spirit? We take a look at Artworks new Clip Art program

If you're feeling inspired and have the time and inclination to design your own Christmas cards or pictures, get hold of this rather handy clip art disk from Artworks. Drawn especially by Artwork artists, you will find exclusive pictures and images which are available only on this disk.

It is priced at £19.95 (inc P&P) with around 100 designs to choose from which are fully-scaleable, vectored with no 'jaggies'. Images on offer include baubles, toys, mistletoe and various motifs which can be reduced, rotated and stretched without any distortion or loss of quality.

It promises to be easy to use as everything is stored in appropriate directories such as baubles in the (you guessed it!) baubles directory and so on. Depending on the intended use, you will have to consider what paper you are going to use. For example, Artworks suggest that pastel paper can sometimes look better than just plain white or print onto envelopes and writing paper to create matching stationary.

Various festive images are on offer and here is the obligatory Christmas Tree



The clip art can be used in various other packages such as Final Writer and Wordworth 3.1+ (not 3.1SE). Christmas Clip Art is available for the Amiga in CGM, Adobe Type 88 EPS and ProDraw Clip Formats. It sure beats getting the glue, double-sided sticky tape and glitter needed for Blue Peter style Christmas cards!

Contact: Artworks, 01469 588138

I've seen the light

Neil Mohr knew nothing about LightWave, but now he is ready to do his own Babylon 5

If a product was singled out as the one that has kept the Amiga alive in America, I think the top of the list would be the Video Toaster from NewTEK. Once it's plugged into your Amiga you have what has been described on numerous occasions as a television studio in a box.

When the Video Toaster was first released it came with a whole suite of software, one part of which was LightWave. This innovative software was instantly the envy of everyone who did not have a Toaster, as originally LightWave was intimately linked to the hardware and could not be used separately.

That is until some software called LightRave appeared and could fool Toaster software into thinking that a Video Toaster was fitted to a machine. This allowed all none Toaster owners access to LightWave especially us all too eager Europeans.

Obviously as soon as someone can feel pennies, or cents falling between their fingers they take action, and lo and behold LightWave 3 quickly appeared as a stand-alone version. Everyone could enjoy the delights of LightWave.

LightWave has been available for something like two years now and there is even a little industry taking off producing support macros and plug-ins for the latest version 4.

The latest addition is the inch thick *Exploring LightWave 3D* book. Its 17 chapters gently guide you through every feature, function, menu and window. Depending on how acquainted you are with LightWave the chapters are grouped into five sections.

For the absolute beginner who has never even used a modeller before the first two sections, that account for almost a quarter of the book, guide you through the absolute basics of 3D modelling. They describe what polygons and objects are, how to attach polygons together, all the way through to setting up a simple scene with your own objects and lighting.

Every step is very well explained with a good number of well thought out illustrations showing what to do and what part of LightWave you are dealing with.

In the third section which uses about half the content of the book every part of LightWave is covered. It will arm you with all the skills you need to create and manipulate complex objects, along with all the knowledge you need to set object textures, scene lighting including the ubiquitous lens flare and all LightWave's camera effects like motion blur.

Probably the only part of the book that disappoints is the section covering bones. The example given is good and shows how bones can be used, but it would have been better if a more detailed example could have been used as they are tricky to get to grips with.

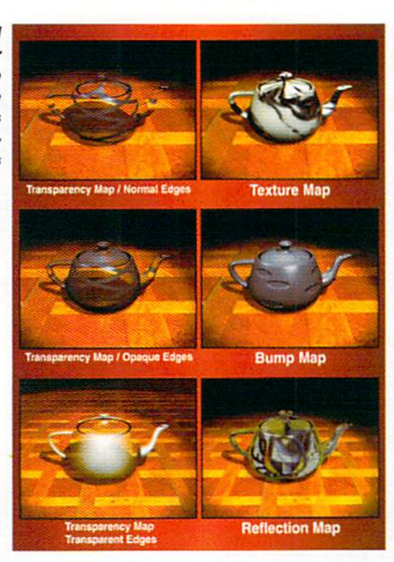
The book does seem to skimp on the animation side of things tending to cover modelling and setting scenes much more heavily with little content actually going over animation techniques.

The last section goes into detail of how to get the best out of LightWave when it's being used for a full production explaining what camera views you will need, getting the best out of lighting and the planning required before starting out on a large project. It is really essential reading if you are planning such a job.

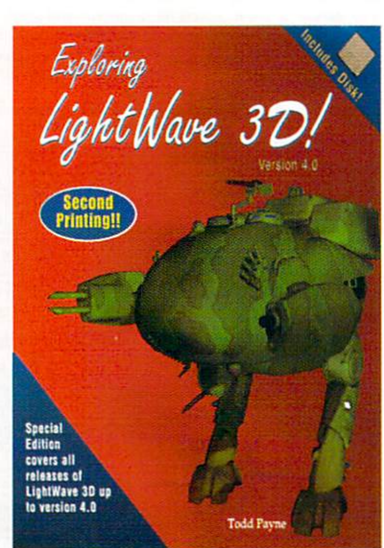
You do get a disk thrown in with the book, but to be honest there is nothing really of note on it: A few models from the example scenes in the book and some chess pieces – things you will probably want to try modelling yourself.

Exploring LightWave is an excellently presented book, well written and covering every aspect of LightWave with clear screen shots accompanied with well written explanations.

It is perfect for LightWave newcomers and even experienced raytracers who are thinking about using LightWave for serious work. For the seasoned user much of the book will be covering old ground but it would make an excellent reference.



A few full colour pages help illustrate Lightwave's finer rendering points



This is the cover, if you go into a bookshop this what you look for

Bottom line

PRODUCT DETAILS	
Product:	Exploring LightWave 3D
Supplier:	New Era Press
Price:	$49.95 US
Phone:	(001) 805 298 1058 Fax: (001) 805 298 3171

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Implementation	90%
Value For Money	85%
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High Density Internal Floppy Drive:	
A3000/A4000 (specify)	$104.95
A2000	$109.50
A500 Internal 880k	$38.95
A600/1200 Internal	**$47.50**
A600/1200 new Amiga Tech. special release button	$1.95
A2000 Internal 880k	$39.95
A3000 Internal 880k	$49.95
A4000 Internal 880k	$49.95
CD32 Replacement CD mechanism	$39.95
GVP SCSI Controller 4008 0K	$119.00
1541 (refurbished)	$39.95
1571 (limited quantity)	$49.95

POWER SUPPLIES (Factory New)

A500	$38.95
A500/A600/A1200 Big Ft. (200 Watt) Micro R/D	$79.95
A500 power supply (used) 220 volts	$19.95
A590	$19.95
A1200 110 volts original factory	$38.95
CD32 Original / Factory (110 volts)	$21.95
CD32 Original / Factory (220 volts)	$14.95
CD32 Big Foot (200 Watt) Micro R/D	$74.50
A2000 110/220V. internal original	$89.95
A2000 Big Foot (300 Watt) Micro R/D	$144.50
A3000 internal (110/220 volts)	$110.00
A3000 Big Foot (250 watts) Micro R/D	$144.50
A3000 Tower	$124.00
A4000 internal (110 volts)	$119.00
A4000 int. 300 Watt Big Foot (exchange)	$169.95
1084S Phillips Flyback Transformer only	$34.95
1084-D1 Phillips/Daewoo Flyback only	$34.50
1084-D2 Daewoo Flyback Transformer only	$34.50
1084S new Motherboard/Flyback	see below
1084S power supply board (refurbished)	$29.95
C64 nonrepairable	$14.95
C64 repairable	$19.95
C64 5.2 amp Heavy Duty (also 1750 REU)	$39.95
C65 220 Volts	$12.50
C65 110 Volt	$21.95
C128D Internal	$24.95
C128 external 5.2 amps	$39.95
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C65 (Special Keyboard)	$19.95
A500 (limited quantity)	$39.95
A600	$26.50
C128D (limited quantity)	$24.95
A1200	**$34.95**
A2000 US version	$74.50
A3000 US version	$74.50
A4000 US version	$74.50
Amiga compatible "IBM keyboards"	see below
A2000 keyboard adapter to A4000	$8.95
A4000 keyboard adapter to A2000	$8.95
6570-01 (71) (315107-01) Keyboard. IC	$14.95

ADD ON BOARDS (Factory New)

68020-030 (A4000)	$67.95
A386 (20MHz) Bridgeboard /SW /Instr.	$259.95
A2088XT/AT Bridgeboard Kit/drive, manuals (A2000)	$29.50
A2058 (0K) (A2000) Expansion board 8K	$69.95
A501 original Ram Exp. – 512K (A500)	$17.95
ICD Trifecta 500 EC: IDE hard drive 16 bit controller, up to 8 megs of fast RAM, space for hard drive	$159.95
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ICD Ad RAM 510+1MB for A500+	$59.95
ICD Ad SCSI 2000	$89.50
ICD AdSCSI 2080 (A2000)	$79.95
ICD Ad Speed	$99.95
ICD Flicker Free Video	$248.95
Microway Flickerfixer	$224.00
Slingshot Pro/pass thru (Micro R/D)	$37.50
A1050 RAM Expander (A1000) 256K	$10.95

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Amiga 1352	$22.50
Wizard 3-button (for all Amigas)	$22.95
A4000	$26.85
Amiga CDTV	$15.95
Amiga A1200 mouse port replacement kit	$7.95
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A500/A2000 Emergency Start-up Kit	$89.95
Amiga Techtopics (entire library)	$99.00
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Final Test diagnostic disk by Amiga	$7.95
Amiga Troubleshooting Guide	$7.95
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C64/128 Dead Test cartridge/manual	$19.95
Service Manuals	SEE BELOW

CLEARANCE SALE

CD32 Network: CD ROM/cable	$53.75
A570 CD ROM drive (for A500)	$99.00
A520 (New) Video Modulator Adapter kit/cables/instructions.	$12.50
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CDTV unit (No Cabinet)	$89.00
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•• New 2.0 Version ••

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- Options: A501 1/2 meg expansion memory board installed add $10.00. ● With 3.1 O/S ROM add $48.50. ● PAL unit with 220V power supply add $29.00 ●
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- AMIGA COMPATIBLE KEYBOARDS – (Just released from Germany.) KB100 is a sophisticated in-line adapter box for use with IBM keyboards. Use the KB100 on your A500/A2000/A3000/ A4000. (A600/A1200 require soldering.) ... **$49.95**
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  A500 schematics, A600, 1084S, 1084S-D1, 1084ST, 1936A, 1960, A2000 ... **$24.00**
  A1200, A3000, A3000T, A4000, CD32 ... **$39.95**
- 1084S MONITOR MOTHERBOARD WITH BUILT IN FLYBACK TRANSFORMER – This new board will cure 90 percent of 1084S monitor problems. Simply switch the motherboard and your monitor problems are solved! This motherboard with the flyback factory mounted is the exact replacement and works with 1084S models only. It's easy to install ... **$69.95**
- AMIGA MONITORS – We have a large supply of refurbished 1084(S), 1902, 1930, 1802, 1702 monitors, etc. For example, the 1084(S) is **$169.95** with cable. 90 day warranty ... **CALL**

Just Released from Amiga Technologies

Amiga "Q-Drive" 1241 CD ROM Drive for the A1200

The Amiga Technologies "Q-Drive" 1241 is a PCMCIA interface for the Amiga 1200 (CD32 emulator). It is a super fast CD-ROM drive equipped with a PCMCIA connector. Plug in your Amiga A1200 and discover the world of CD-ROM.

The 1241 operates at quad speed with data transfer rates up to 600 KB per second guarantee optimal access times. The system supports multi-session and multi-tasking mode. It is able to manage several jobs at a time and is easy to operate.

View your favourite photos on your PC screen: the Amiga Q-Drive 1241 is Kodak PhotoCD compatible. Enjoy audio CDs in hi-fi quality or mix the music with sound generated by your Amiga.

Features: **● Open Architecture; PCMCIA Interface ● Compatible with ISO9660, Amiga OS, PC-DOS and Mac HFS ● Portable System ● Extremely User Friendly ● Quad Speed: Data transfer rates up to 600KBs ● Supports multi-session and multi-tasking ● Reads audio CDs and Kodak PhotoCDs ● Mixes audio CD sound and sound from the Amiga stereo audio port ● Runs most CD32 games and programs.**

Price: $179.95
(Quantity pricing available)

- A1200 MOTHERBOARD – Paxtron has purchased a limited supply of new A1200 motherboards, both NTSC and PAL. They come with 3.0 O/S, all chips, 30 day warranty. Specify NTSC or PAL. Very limited quantity, very rare find. ... **$289.95**
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  (Internal Supergen sold initially for $650.)
- A2000 MOTHERBOARD: Newly manufacturer, latest revision with 2.04 ROM, 1 meg Agnus, 16 MHz CPU, 90 day warranty ... **$399.95**
  We are taking LOTS of orders for these boards. To assure yours, get your order in quickly!

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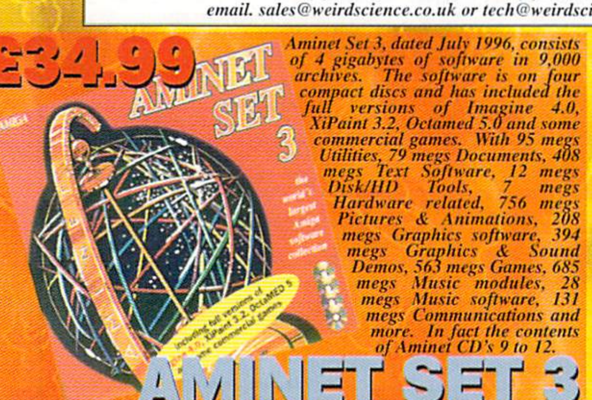




Weird Science



Weird Science Ltd. 1 Rowlandson Close, Leicester, Leicestershire. LE4 2SE
Tel. +44 (0)116 234 0682 Fax. +44 (0)116 235 0045
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Aminet Set 3, dated July 1996, consists of 4 gigabytes of software in 9,000 archives. The software is on four compact discs and has included the full versions of Imagine 4.0, XiPaint 3.2, Octamed 5.0 and some commercial games. With 95 megs Utilities, 79 megs Documents, 408 megs Text Software, 12 megs Disk/HD Tools, 7 megs Hardware related, 756 megs Pictures & Animations, 208 megs Graphics software, 394 megs Graphics & Sound Demos, 563 megs Games, 685 megs Music modules, 28 megs Music software, 131 megs Communications and more. In fact the contents of Aminet CD's 9 to 12.

AMINET SET 3



The Amiga System Booster CD enables users to really make the most of their computers with a superb collection of tools to push the capabilities of the Amiga to the limits. Nearly all the fantastic utilities can be started by simply direct from the compact disc. No de-archiving required. The the contents include a vast collection of screen blankers, mouse tools & commodities, backup, file management, cache programs to optimise system performance, data recovery, CD-ROM utilities, virus killers and a whole host more. This CD-ROM provides for beginners and professionals.

SYSTEM BOOSTER



£49.95

MAGIC PUBLISHER

Magic Publisher comprises of four compact discs a on this unique CD-ROM set you will find all you need create professional looking documents. There are mo than 10,000 Fonts (Colour Fonts, Bitmap, IFF, Adob Intellifonts, Truetype & DMF), more than 5,000 clipa Many of these are exclusive to this compact disc. F commercial versions of Final Writer 4 SE a Wordworth 4 TD are included. Both rated as great wo processors on the Amiga. Tools for creating WW pages along with backgrounds and special clip art f this purpose is also included. A 100 page book containg printouts of all the fonts and clipart.



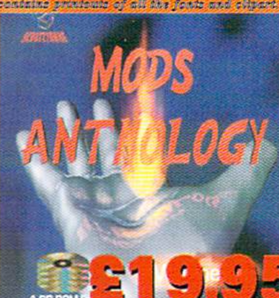
Aminet Set 2, dated November 1995, consists of 4 gigabytes of software in 12,000 archives. The software is on four compact discs and has included the full contents of Aminet CD's 5 to 8. With Utilities, Documents, Text Software, Disk/HD Tools, Hardware related, Pictures & Animations, Graphics software, Graphics & Sound Demos, Games, Music modules, Music software, Communications, Amiga Development software, Business software and more. All of the archives are easily accessible with a simple Index menu system allow easy unarchiving with complete search and find facilities.

AMINET SET 2

£14.99

The Amiga Developers CD from Amiga Technologies comes complete with the all the developers tools and docs. provided to the official developers. Included are the complete CD32 developers tools with Build CD and ISO CD, Envoy 2.0 package, Enforcer, Workbench 2.0, 3.0, 3.1 tools and documents with the updated native developers kit, SANA II package and the installer package. Also included is a vast amount of info. A must for Amiga enthusiasts.

AMIGA DEVELOPERS CD



£19.95

MODS ANTHOLOGY

A collection 18,000 music module arranged of four compact discs a sorted by composer, groups and typ All stored ready to use from the compa discs. Provided with 11 megs of Modu lists and 25 megs of module players fo many different computer platform This 7 years titanic work provides over 1,000 hours of music enjoyment alon with information on may of th composers whose work is featured.



Aminet, the Worlds largest collection of freely distributable Amiga software. Up to 10,000 users access the archives every day and countless programmers publish directly via Aminet. This CD-ROM collection, on four compact discs contains approx. 4 gigs of in 12,500 archives. Set 1 contains the contents of Aminet CD's 1 to 4. Categories include Utilities, Documents, Text Software, Disk/HD Tools, Hardware, Pictures & Animations, Graphics & Sound Demos, Games, Music, Communications, Development, Business software and more. Index facilities also included.

AMINET SET 1

£49.95

The Amiga Repair Kit CD comes complete with the all with all the tools required to backup and rescue your precious data on hard drives. Disk Salve 4 will rescue and restore most damaged, corrupt and even deleted files from floppies, hard disks etc. During the process it will attempt to fix all problems caused by software failures or physical damage. RDB-Salve 1.1 is a superb program that will allow you to restore your valuable data even if the Rigid Disk Block has been destroyed or over written. Recovery can recover files from normal or corrupted disks. Essential Amiga Tools.

AMIGA REPAIR KIT



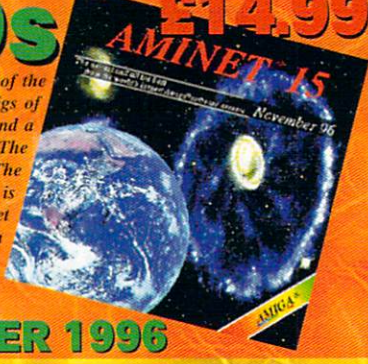
Meeting Pearls 3 (Software Collection) £ 9.99

Workbench Add-on CD (Utilities) £ 24.95

£14.99

AMINET CDs

Aminet, the worlds largest Amiga archive, provides compact discs of the sites latest software uploads. Each volume contains about 1.1 gigs of archives with a superb menu system for un-archiving the files and a simple search facility to help you find exactly the file required. The search facility will even list the compact disc that the file is on. The latest Aminet CD's contain a theme. The Aminet 14 14 theme is business with the full version of Turbo Calc 2.1 included. Aminet 15 is available in November and Aminet 16 available in December. Aminet CD's 12 to 14 are also still available. Each Aminet CD costs just £ 14.99 and provides the very latest Amiga shareware software on CD.



AMINET 16 AVAILABLE DECEMBER 1996



Giga Graphics Four CD-ROMs Image Collection £ 19.95

Xi-Paint v. 4.0 24 Bit Image Manipulation £ 49.95

International Distributor:



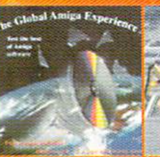

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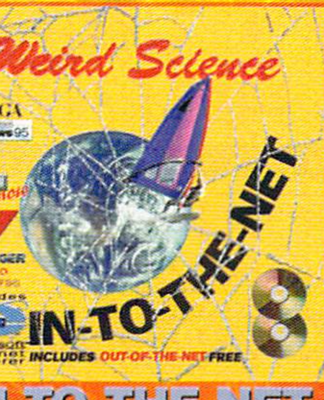
The Euro CD contains a vast variety of programs and data for the Amiga in the Aminet mould. However this CD differentiates itself by have the contents ready to run without de-archiving. The contents include Animations 36 megs, Commercial 21 megs, Demo's 65 megs, Disk tools 12 megs, Fonts 12 megs, Games 57 megs, Misc. 6 megs, Modules 110 megs, Music 21 megs, Objects 12 megs, Pictures 118 megs, Presentations 23 megs, Printer 1 meg, Programs 23 megs, Samples 4 megs, System 10 megs, Text files 26 megs, Utilities 16 megs and Vidules 3 megs. Full English docs. and menus.

EURO CD VOL. 1



Global Experience Commercial Demos Software £ 24.95

Art Studio 24 Bit Paint Package £ 39.95



£19.95

Getting an Amiga connected to the Internet is one of the most difficult tasks due to the complex installation routines of AmiTCP and the lack of any real guidance. Not only will this situation change but you will now be able to get connected to the Internet and the WWW without a hard drive or the complicated setting up of the software. Our extensive networking skills have really been put to the test providing a simple connection from a compact disc providing a pleasant introduction and connection to the internet. Most of the difficult setting up is done automatically for you with the connection program provided. All that is required is the answers to a few simple questions. In addition the CD contains all the tools required for both the beginner and expert, full instructions on getting connected and many very helpful documents on the Internet and WWW. The tools include AmiTCP, Mail, FTP, WWW and many more. In addition there is a section on WWW page creation with clip art and creation tools. Easy Hard Drive installation possible but not required.

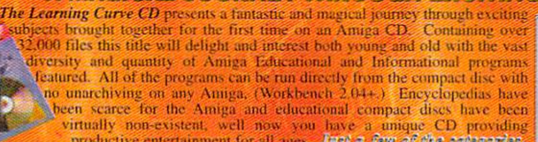
Wondering what all this World Wide Web is all about, worried about expensive connection and telephone bills, concerned that it may not be for you. Well check it out without the connection or telephone charges with 'Out-of-the-Net'. This compact disc contains the contents of actual WWW sites for you to browse with the Amiga browsers provided, no online costs at all. It is all included ready to run directly from the compact disc. The CD acts as an pseudo Internet provider with the sites readily available on the compact disc. There is a diverse variety of sites and subjects covered to give an excellent feel for the WWW whilst you browse for free.

UPGRADES AVAILABLE

iBrowse (Full Version) £ 24.95
Miami Registration £ 24.95

N-TO-THE-NET INCLUDES OUT-OF-THE-NET

£19.95 A MAGICAL JOURNEY THROUGH EXCITING DIVERSE SUBJECTS



The Learning Curve CD presents a fantastic and magical journey through exciting subjects brought together for the first time on an Amiga CD. Containing over 32,000 files this title will delight and interest both young and old with the vast diversity and quantity of Amiga Educational and Informational programs featured. All of the programs can be run directly from the compact disc with no unarchiving on any Amiga, (Workbench 2.04+.) Encyclopedias have been scarce for the Amiga and educational compact discs have been virtually non-existent, well now you have a unique CD providing productive entertainment for all ages. *Just a few of the categories.*

Aircraft	Educational	Religion
Art	Fairy Tales	Science
Computer	Mathematics	Astronomy
Desktop Utils	Spelling	Biology
Electronics	Languages	Books
Engineering	Literature	Chemistry
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Health	Music	Geology
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THE LEARNING CURVE

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SoundStudio has arrived. With fabulous new features including full mixing facilities, save modules as samples, notation editor (with printing), 64 channels, new midi commands, more Toccata support, no sample size limits, fastmem facility and more. SoundStudio has lifted Amiga music creation to new heights. A must for all musicians.

SOUNDSTUDIO

£19.95



The music and sounds files can be auditioned from an easy to use interface for both a PC & Amiga. Included are 4,400+ modules, 400 extra large modules (over 300k each,) 795 Screamtracker modules, 1,000+ categorised midi files, 4240 IFF samples, 620 categorised WAV samples, 1,000+ Walkabout Instrument samples in WAV & IFF formats. 100's of utilities for Amiga and as a bonus the complete MidiCraft collection of Midi files. Now includes Octamed 6 CD FREE.

SOUNDS TERRIFIC 2

£14.99

The very best in CD32 and Amiga Networking has just got so much better. This CD is an absolute must have for all Network CD owners. The concept and operation has been improved in every possible way. The CD32 boots in about 45 seconds, with more memory available and fake fast ram to improve speed. One button press on the Amiga can set-up any program to run on both machines, including the entire Sernet set-up at the speed of your choice on both machines. No more difficult set-up routines. Sernet now runs at various speeds and is now the fastest ever. A keyboard and mouse can be emulated on the CD32. Twin Express can now be controlled from DOpus. Serlink allows easy downloading of data. Plus so much more. The best way to join a CD32 to an Amiga

NETWORK CD 2

£14.99



The Dem Rom CD contains over 1,000 digital elevation maps (DEMs) from the USGS. Along with these digital elevation maps are thumbnail renderings of their topographical maps in Jpeg format for easy previewing. Dem Rom originally appeared on Light Rom 3. The digital elevation maps can be used with any program that accepts the DEM format such as Vista Pro, Scenery Animator or World Construction Set to create beautiful still images or fantastic flights through your favourite scenery. DEMs are royalty free.

DEM ROM

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The Multimedia Backdrops CD contains 100 backdrops designed for Desktop Video and Multimedia work in the IFF24, TARGA and TIFF file formats in NTSC (752x480) and PAL (768x576) resolutions. The INDEX directory provides thumbnail renderings of all the backdrops for easy previewing. Fabulous quality images.

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Featuring a massive one thousand and seventy eight 256 x 256 pixel textures. Each detailed texture tile can be tessellated to create images with absolute seamless edge to edge matching. Superb for wrapping around any complex object perfectly or adding instant backdrops for WWW pages etc. Finding the right texture is easy with a 24 page colour index booklet displaying all of the textures in their glorious colour. The images are in IFF, GIF, JPG, TGA & PICT formats.

WEIRD TEXTURES

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The very best from Light Rom 1, 2 and 3 with over 6,000 Lightwave objects and scene files. Light Rom Gold was created for those who did not purchase Light Rom 3. The material on Light Rom Gold is compatible with all versions of Lightwave on all platforms. This material is presented using the content directory method for all users of Lightwave 4.0 and higher. All of the Lightwave objects and scene files are represented with thumbnail renderings for easy previewing.

LIGHT ROM GOLD

£19.95



Imagine PD 3D consists of thousands of Imagine 3D objects created by it's Amiga and PC users from around the world using Imagine 1.0 up to Imagine 4.0. The objects fall into many different categories including Anatomy, Animals, Aviation, Botany, Buildings, Computers, Fonts, Furniture, Household, Kitchen, Land, Logos, Misc., Music, Phones, Robots, Ships, Space, sports, Video, Vehicles, Weapons and many others! Creating the objects is the hardest part of the 3D rendering so remove the drudgery out of 3D.

IMAGINE PD 3D

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LIGHT-ROM 4, a 2 CD-ROM set for the Amiga, Mac, Windows / NT features all new Lightwave objects and scene files. In addition there is a bonus CD-ROM of 3,000 Jpeg Textures, see below. LIGHT-ROM 4 also includes a collection scene files by Alan Chan. This set contains wholly new material and is an absolutely superb resource for Lightwave.

...t Rom ...o u r ...ures new ...lty free ...t e r i a l ...ted with ...twave 4.0 & ...ersions.

LIGHT ROM 4

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The 3,000 Jpeg Textures CD contains over 3,000 textures in the Jpeg format. There are thumbnail renderings of every texture for easy previewing. The textures cover all categories including Brick, Bump Maps, Carpet, Cloth, Fabric, Formica, Granite, Greenery, Images, Marble, Organic, Rock, Skin, Stone, Stucco, Tiles and Wood. Realistic high quality textures for a variety of uses are provided in the universal Jpeg format.

3000 JPEG TEXTURES

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The award winning Multimedia Experience provided for users to create their own stunning multimedia presentations with images, text, video and sound. With the new low price all users can start multimedia.

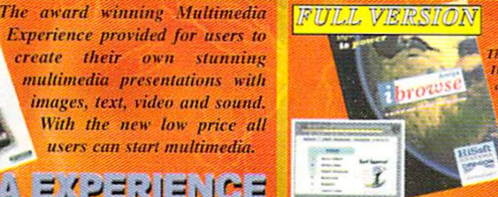
Nexus 2 ...vailable £19.95 ... Data ...s FREE. Nexus is a ...tory utility ...ding easy file ...gement.

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The fully featured World Wide Web browser, IBrowse makes surfing the net with your Amiga a breeze. Supports HTML 1, 2 & 3 as well as Netscape extensions. Caches pages, uses MUI (included) fully compatible with In-To-The-Net. Works with any video card and will support external datatypes for sounds, animations and video.

IBROWSE



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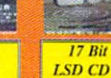
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Amiga server



Tushar Joshi offers some useful insight into running your own Web server



A Web server is a program that serves files to remote or local applications that connect to it. It acts like a filestore and when you request a document it will send it to you via http (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol). Basically, all jargon aside, you send the server the name and location of the document and the server scurries away to find it and then sends it to you on your computer.

Using special software it is possible to run a web server on your Amiga for millions of people to view documents that you allow them to see. It doesn't stop there (unfortunately), with a web server it allows you to do many neat features, like run cgi scripts and server side includes.

What do I need?

All you need is an Amiga running Amitcp4.0 or later, and the software. The important thing here is that you don't even need a net connection since it's possible you may want to save time on-line and mirror your current working site on your Amiga. This allows you to make changes/updates/additions and then simply patch your existing remote site with the changes you have made locally.

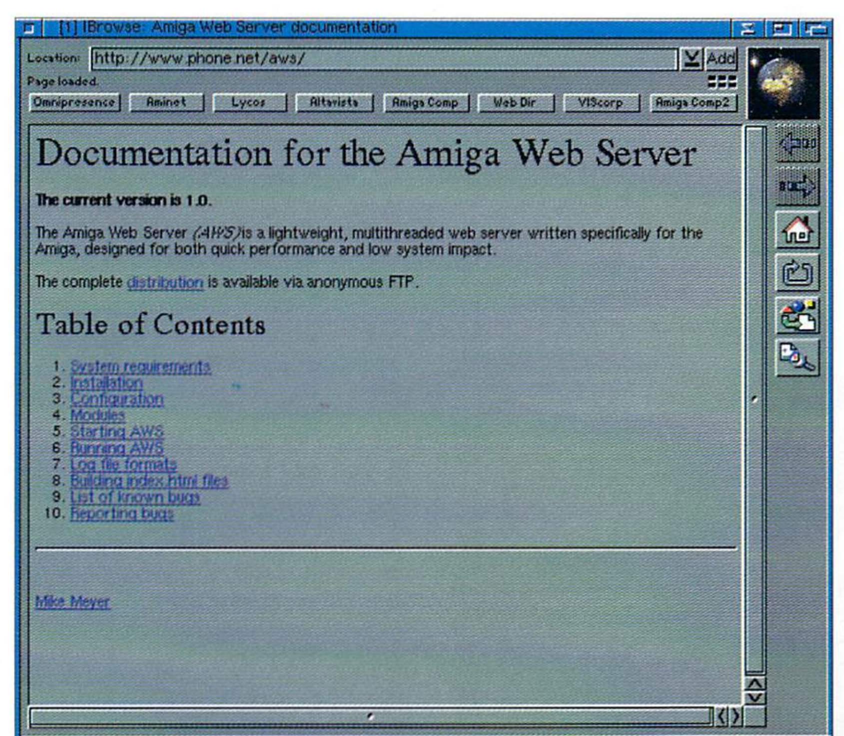
Obviously if you want others to see your pages then a modem, phone line and Internet account would be very useful indeed unless you are going to buy everyone a plane ticket to come round your house and view them.

How do I set one up?

I will explain the AWS server since it is specially designed for an Amiga and is very small and compact. It is even possible to run the whole tcp stack and AWS server from a floppy disk. To set up and install aws shouldn't take longer than 30 minutes, although fine tuning and customising will take a little bit longer.

Anyway enough talk and lets start!. First of all download all the files from the shoplist (see boxout) including the extra "aws.lha" from turtle.net. This is a configuration file for the server that will save you a lot of time and also includes "rx-gate" which is somewhere on phone.net (I couldn't find it though!!).

Next, make a directory somewhere on your hard drive where you want to put binary, configuration and modules for AWS. This doesn't necessarily have to be where you will put html and cgi programs. In here decompress the file aws-2.0b5.lha and rename it to "aws". Also decompress the common.lha into here and make a directory called "modules" and decompress "mod-



AWS – the Amiga Web Server – is specifically designed for the Amiga

FUNNY TALK

DNS (Domain Name Server) – This maps all internet name addresses into their corresponding ip address and vice versa.

HTTPD (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Daemon) – This handles all the incoming requests for pages for the host. In some servers this is able to cope hostnames and serve documents for many domains.

CGI (Common Gateway Interface) – Instead of displaying these files they are executed by the remote server by taking in the input and producing an output in html.

Document Root – This is the root of the server where all files are references from unless there is another map redirection for it. So http://www.victim.com/ would point to the document root. And subdirectories may be placed beneath this.

HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) – A text formatting language allowing people to create web pages easily. Some people strangely regard this as programming!

ules.lha" into there. Finally decompress aws.lha into the aws root you made and you should have a directory structure like this:

```
Directories - rexx conf cgi-bin
modules(cgi.library status.library)
Files - aws rx-gate
```

Add an assign for this directory so that the aws binary knows where to look for the configuration files, although you may specify these places on the command line. Add the assign like this:

```
Assign AWS: Drive:where/aws/is/stored
```

All the files for aws are now in place and now the final part is configuring the server for use on your system. The configuration files are kept in aws:conf and there are two. The first is called "AWS" and contains the majority of the server information.

1. The server port is the port to which web browsers connecting to your computer should connect to view your pages. This can be left at 80 but if you require to change it you will have to access your server by using the http://hostname.domain:portnumber/ – if the portnumber is omitted the browser assumes port 80.

2. Next in the file is the server name. This needs to be the name of your server – if you have a static ip it is the hostname or an alias for your computer. The alias must be available on DNS so as others can find your machine. This name is only used on server error messages so it's not too much of a problem if you don't have a fixed ip but will mean that if users encounter an error on the server they will not be redirected to your home page.

3. The maintainer is simple your email address in case someone wishes to contact you about a server query or problem.

4. The index file is the file that the server will look for in a directory if no file is specified. So for example the url is http://www.victim.com/mydir/ the browser will send you the page http://www.victim.com/mydir/index.html.

5. Now for the most configurable part of the file – the map entries that allow you to redirect a url to another site or another directory on your local system. The format for a map excludes all host and domain information so a url of http://www.victim.com/mydir would simply be /mydir in relation to the localsite.

So a map for this would be:

```
map /mydir directory Drive:my/dir/somewhere
# replace with your preference.
```

This allows you to map all requests for mydir to a specific directory on your system. Some defaults are necessary like:

```
map / directory Drive:document/root
```

This would map your whole web site to a certain directory, so http://www.victim.com/ would be mapped to Drive:document/root. This is all fine if you want to map html directories but what if you want to specify a directory where, rather than display the file to the browser, you wish the server to run the file and display the output?

For this you need to define a cgi directory and you do this in exactly the same way as a html directory except replace directory with cgi. This tells the server to execute anything in this directory when it is accessed rather than displaying it.

```
map /cgi-bin cgi Drive:www/cgistuff
```

So now when someone types in the url http://www.victim.com/cgi-bin/myprog the server will know Drive:www/cgistuff/myprog directory should be executed. The list of maps are searched in the order they appear in the conf file. So the server will look at each line in the map file until it finds a map that returns a htmp page or runs a cgi. So if your /cgi-bin directory clashes with the / directory you may find you are not able to execute cgi scripts and instead the cgi scripts are shown on the browser.

For example:

```
map / directory sys:www
map /cgi-bin cgi sys:www/cgi-bin
```

When someone accesses the directory /cgi-bin the server will look to see if there is a directory under sys:www called cgi-bin first. If there is, as in this case, the server will send the file to the browser. The solution is to not make directory maps similar to any of the other map files.



Top tips to make Web sites

The Types File

This is the second configuration file and contains the extensions for the files that the server will have to deal with. This tells the browser what type of file it is sending across by the extension.

Run aws from the command line and try typing http://localhost/ on your browser. Depending on whether you have an index.html in your root directory or not, a page will be displayed on the browser.

Problems

Some problems you may encounter.

- If it is a cgi program check it is executable on the command line – protect cgi.file +s will make the program executable.
- Stack may cause a problem with some scripts so it may be necessary to add a line in amitcp:db/Amitcp.config saying mbuf_conf maxmem=512
- Does a map entry for the directory you are searching for exist?
- Check map paths are not clashing as explained above
- On cgi programs check that #! is the first line if it is a script and the associated program and path are correct.

WHERE TO GET IT FROM?

AWS (Amiga Web Server) : ftp ftp.phone.net

Files needed:

```
ftp://ftp.phone.net/pub/amiga/aws/beta/modules.lha
ftp://ftp.phone.net/pub/amiga/aws/beta/aws-2.0b5.lha
ftp://ftp.phone.net/pub/amiga/aws/common-097.lha
ftp://ftp.turtle.net/pub/amiga/aws/aws.lha
```

The last one is an extra file I made to make it easier to install since to be honest ftp.phone.net is a bit of a mess.

```
Apache Web Server : ftp src.doc.ic.ac.uk -
File needed : /pub/aminet/comm/www/apache_1.0.5.lha
```

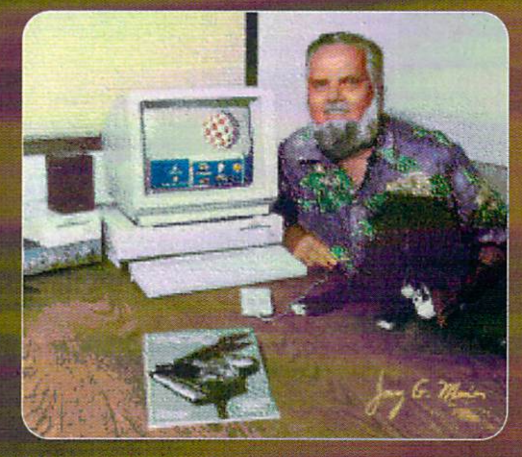
The difference between the two is that AWS is specially designed for the Amiga whereas Apache is a port from Unix using gnu-c and ixemul.library. AWS is also a lot smaller than Apache although there is no straight forward configuration script to install AWS. Apache is very widely used on the WWW as a server due to it having many features and also has a nice simple installer for the Amiga.

I have only described the installation of AWS here, although some similarities may arise between the two.

Heroes & Villians
part one

As the New Year beckons **Gareth Lofthouse** begins a series profiling the men that made, broke and rebuilt the Amiga

Jay Miner



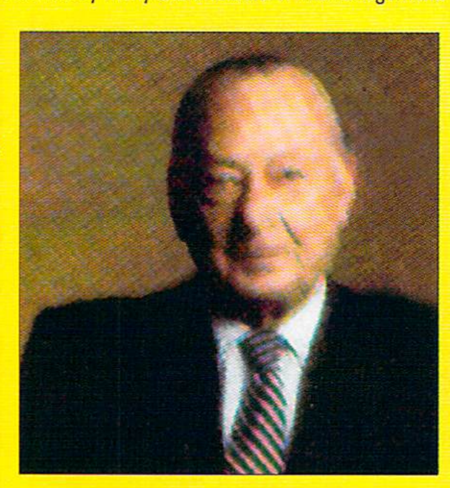
Who ?
Founding Father of the Amiga
Claim to fame
In 1982 this experienced console designer dreamt up the idea of the ultimate games machine. He joined forces with Dave Morse, RJ Mical and Carl Sassenrath and formed a highly secretive company called Hi-Toro.

Collectively obsessed with frumpy girls' names, Hi-Toro disguised their innovative custom chips with names like Paula, Agnus and Denise and code named the project 'Lorraine'. Inevitably, this girly infatuation led to the ground-breaking computer being Christened after the Spanish word for girlfriend - Amiga.
The Legacy
The very existence of the entire Amiga range...but he hated that name !
Where'd he go ?
Sadly the Amiga's first visionary hero died after a heart attack on 20 June 1994.
Worship-Loathing Ratio
5:1

Irving Gould

Who ?
Chairman and CEO of Commodore
Claim to fame
Top dog at the company that bought the Amiga In a way, he helped turn the machine into a major success story by the late '80s. But Gould is remembered by many as one of the bad guys.

After Commodore collapsed on 30 April 1994, Gould and the rest of the Board of Directors were accused by many shareholders of mismanagement. Despite producing arguably the most successful range of home computers ever, Gould's company had lost $374 million dollars in its last 18 months.

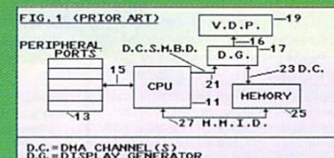


The Legacy
Debts, liquidation and a rather bitter aftertaste.
Where'd he go ?
Last seen beginning a long vacation in the Bahamas.
Worship-Loathing Ratio
1:5

Amiga through the years



1982 Jay Miner, RJ Mical, Dave Morse and Carl Sassenrath team up to develop a new super computer. They form Hi-Toro, and disguise themselves as joystick designers. Project 'Lorraine' is initially backed with $7 million dollars invested by three dentists!



1984 For two years Jay Miner's company has been designing a games machine with a difference. Now in June '84 the Amiga gets the cash injection it needs when Commodore buys Amiga Inc for $4.25 a share – beating an offer from rivals Atari.



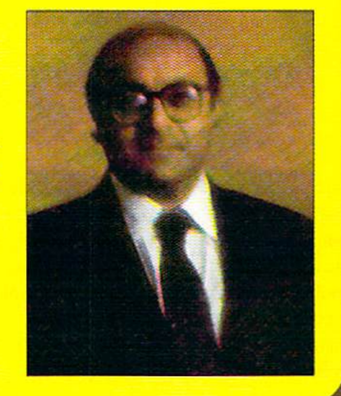
1986 The A1000 is finally launched in the UK, boasting a revolutionary architecture and a multi-tasking OS. But despite its innovative technology, at £1,500 it's no snip and the Atari ST at half its price was bound to sell better.



Early 1987 A new Amiga, the A2000 is produced. It's highly expandable with five Zorro II slots plus a video slot. But it costs a horrifying £3,200, which is proven unlikely to make it the mass market computer we were waiting for.

Mehdi Ali

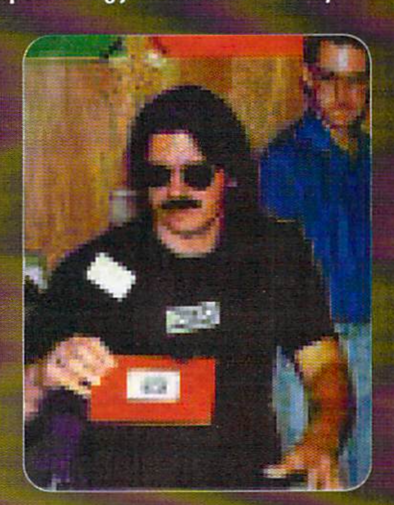
Who?
President of Commodore International
Claim to fame
Greatly misunderstood all-round nice guy of the Amiga community. Only joking... Rightly or wrongly, Ali is widely blamed, more than any other individual, for the Commodore crash. He was made President in 1989 with responsibility for sales and marketing, but his critics claim he was an autocratic manager who didn't understand the nature of the Amiga market. Those who worked with him are particularly scathing: "There's no doubt Ali is responsible for the demise of Commodore" says David Pleasance.



The Legacy
A wealth of nightmares for ex-Amiga engineers.
Where'd he go
Now if we knew that...
Worship-Loathing Ratio
0:5

Dave Haynie

Who ?
Amiga cult hero
Claim to fame
A senior Commodore engineer, Dave perhaps deserves more credit than anyone for the way the Amiga developed. Having joined Commodore way back in '83, he helped design the A2000, A3000 and A4000. Haynie also led the legendary A3000+ and AAA projects, but when Mehdi Ali came to power Dave's breakthrough designs were canned. He left Commodore in 1984 and produced The Deathbed Vigil, the bitter film that told the true story behind the Commodore crisis.

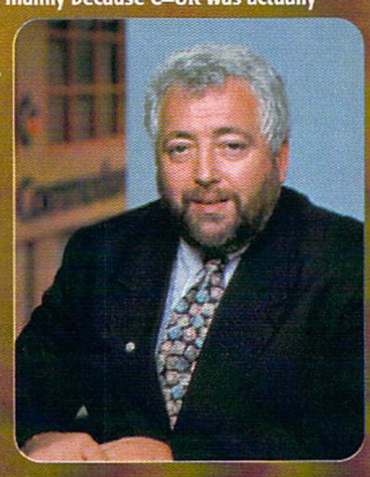


The Legacy
All the big box Amigas and *that* video
Where'd he go ?
Off to make Power PC consumer computers at PIOS
Worship-Loathing Ratio
4:1

David Pleasance

Who ?
Managing Director, Commodore UK
Claim to fame
Came second playing flamenco guitar in the Australian version of Opportunity Knocks. Otherwise, he garnered a rare level of respect as manager of a Commodore subsidiary, mainly because C=UK was actually running profitably while the rest of the company went to hell.

At one point he was a front-runner in the bid for the Amiga technology, but lost out to Escom. He will not be forgiven however for producing the musical tribute to the Amiga, 'Everybody's Girlfriend.'



The Legacy
Alas, after Escom took the reins his involvement with the Amiga ended.
Where'd he go ?
Last heard strutting his stuff at his music multimedia company, Tangent.
Worship-Loathing Ratio
3:2

Don Gilbreath

Who ?
Amiga multimedia man
Claim to Fame
Bit of a dubious one, here. You see Don invented the CDTV, which may have been a ground-breaking piece of multimedia technology, but was also one of Commodore's most notorious flops.

Still, that wasn't really his fault. He also designed the equally unsuccessful CD32, hailed at the time as the first next gen, 32-bit game console. Unfortunately no-one wanted to make any games for it which turned out to be a bit of a problem....



The Legacy
Two different coloured foot-rests.
Where'd he go ?
Making ED set top box at VISCORP. Third time lucky ?
Worship-Loathing Ratio
3:2



Later 1987 At last an affordable but nevertheless powerful machine arrives from Commodore in the form of the Amiga 500. It is the same as the A2000, except it lacks the internal slots and is much more compact.



1989 Commodore appoints a new President, 43-year-old Mehdi Ali. "We are fortunate that Mr Ali has agreed to expand the role he has been playing in restructuring Commodore into a major competitor in the industry" says Irving Gould.



1990 The first truly new machine since the A500, the A3000 is the first fully 32 bit computer with a 68030 processor and an ECS chipset. Also boasted SCSI interface as standard, a flicker fixer and Zorro III slots. Back then it was a dream come true...



1991 CDTV, Commodore's much vaunted multimedia system, is released in the UK for £599.99. Could have been the start of the multimedia revolution, but proved too expensive with poor software. Becomes an instant dodo of consumer technology.



Off the C -

Keen to start programming or adding to your existing coding skills? We've asked **Paul Overaa** not only to provide a round up of the more popular C packages but also to explain some of the other issues that can confuse a newcomer...

No one gets far into the world of Amiga coding without coming up against the C programming language. It was (and still is) used to code much of the operating system and support libraries. Almost all Amiga technical manuals assume a reasonable degree of C literacy. It is actually a very easy language to learn and even users who have never done any programming before should, in theory at least, be able to write and compile simple programs within 10 minutes of installing a C compiler environment.

In practice things have rarely gone that smoothly in the past and one of the reasons is that compiler tools tended to be Shell-based. Compilation and linking required long command lines and even the slightest of errors (sometimes just using the wrong case for particular compiler options) could cause the whole process to fall to pieces. Underneath the surface, compilers and linkers today are still driven in much the same way but, in recent times, compiler writers have added user-friendly 'front ends' to their packages. This trend has turned the mechanics of C program construction into a whole new ball game – in short C compiler use has become a lot easier!

There have been other changes and not all of them welcome. Development stopped on the most famous Amiga C package of all, SAS C, the year before last. Before that another popular environment, Manx's Aztec C, also vanished as the development plug was pulled. It's not all doom and gloom by any means but, as far as currently supported commercial C compilers are concerned, just two main choices are now available...

DICE C

This package comes from the Obvious Implementations Corporation and, for a long time, was the rising star in the world of Amiga C coding. The compiler, while a joy to use on a hard disk machine, can also be easily used on a 1 Meg/twin-floppy based Amiga (and at a pinch, on a single drive machine although this latter option isn't recommended).

A major factor in DICE's success is a brilliant front end called VMake which allows you to create, edit, compile, link and debug projects without ever having to resort to awkward Shell command lines.

All you need do is click on the VMake's Make button - and the awkward compiling and linking work gets done automatically. A few seconds later you have your runnable program - it really is as simple as that.

Like all commercial compilers, DICE C comes with a great many utilities. There's a source code management system to help maintain revision histories for your projects, an on-line help system, a debugger, a profiler, file compressor, disassembler and many other tools.

Another point worth mentioning is that recently it has become possible to buy DICE C at reduced price by opting for a manual on disk, rather than having the original printed documentation. Not ideal by any means but, considering this cuts the cost of the package in half, it's an option worth considering.

Bottom line

PRODUCT DETAILS

Product	DICE C
Supplier	Fourth Level Developments
Price	With printed manual: £98.95 (+p&p £5), disk manual: £45 (+p&p £3)
Tel	0117-985 4455
email	http://www.flevel.co.uk

Storm C

As you'll know from the review in the November issue of *Amiga Computing*, Storm C is produced in Germany by Haage & Partner. It's been around for some time but the English translation of the manual and disk docs have only recently been completed.

Both CD and floppy versions are available and the main components of the package include a project manager, an editor, compiler, linker, source-level debugger, the standard function libraries and, of course, the official Amiga headers. One of the advantages of using Storm C is that it can also compile C++ code but this sort of flexibility comes at a price. The package is not only expensive but to use it you'll need a hard disk machine with a minimum of 3Mb Ram.



Storm C's toolbar and colour editing also help to make C program creation easier

Nevertheless the package is good and there's no doubt that it works like a dream. The compiler, linker and so on are controlled by a front end called StormCCP which provides both toolbar control for compiling, debugging and project handling plus an extensive set of menu options. One nice thing about the toolbar is that help messages which explain the purpose of particular toolbar icons automatically appear whenever you move the pointer into the icon area. In most cases the task of compiling and linking programs is totally transparent. A single click on the toolbar's Make button is enough to cause Storm C to compile, link and so produce the executable version (as with DICE C this also applies to large multiple-file projects as well as simple single file programs).

Another useful facility is that the editor provides colour keyword highlighting similar to that found on PC packages such as Borland C/C++.



PRODUCT DETAILS

Product	StormC
Supplier	Blittersoft
Price	Storm C £269.95, Upgrade £179.95, Storm C Lite £119 (entry level cut down version)
Tel	01908 261466
email	bsoft@mag-net.co.uk
	WWW: http://blittersoft.wildnet.co.uk

to side!

Public Domain Packages

For those on a budget there are compilers which can provide a starting point for next to nothing. Steve Hawtin's 'charityware' NorthC package works well enough but is, unfortunately, one of several PD compilers that suffer from the disadvantage of not supporting ANSI C style function use.

Another offering, PDC, is better in this respect although many users have found it both difficult to set up and 'buggy'.

One package that arrived only recently is a beta test version of an ANSI C compiler called vbcc. At the moment however, the disk-based docs are rather poor (and again installation is not particularly easy) but one point that may be of interest to more advanced coders is that the compiler source is provided.

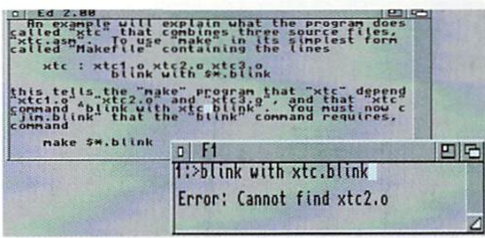
You can of course, get many such packages for free if you have a modem and can log on to an Aminet mirror site although all these packages, and several other compilers, can be obtained from most public domain libraries for less than a pound anyway.

Software 2000 incidentally (telephone 01827 287377), as well as listing NorthC and Small C also stock GCC v2.61 (the only public domain C/C++ offering).

Many people remain convinced however, that the best cheap path for beginners is still the freely distributable version of DICE C. Needless to say it's nowhere near as good as the full commercial version but it is more than capable enough to get you started!

You can of course, get many such packages for free if you have a modem and can log on to an Aminet mirror site although all these packages, and several other compilers, can be obtained from most public domain libraries

One of the difficulties with many PD offerings is in the initial setting up of the compiler environment

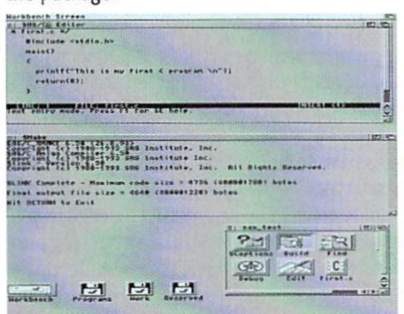


SAS C

SAS C officially had development stopped a couple of years ago but Software Hut in the States still have copies available of the last version released (this was the version incidentally that included C++) and that's all the encouragement I needed to mention this package.

Quite simply it was a rock-solid product and THE compiler of choice among professional coders. Its manuals are so good in fact that even today the documentation provided with DICE C or Storm C just does not even come close.

It must be said that SAS C's Workbench-based front, relative to the other two commercial compilers I've mentioned, is a little archaic but it is still eminently usable. There are many coders who have continued to use it. You do however, need a hard drive and at least a couple of megs of ram available to use the package.



SAS C – gone but not forgotten, and still available from US sources!

K&R Versus ANSI C

For a long time C did not had an official standard - the language definition was based on a book called *The C Programming Language* written by Brian Kernighan and Dennis Richie (hence the term 'K&R C').

Eventually however, an ANSI (American National Standards Institute) committee was set up to look at the language, make some improvements, and create an official standard. The biggest difference between K&R C and ANSI C is the way that functions are written and declared. An ANSI style function description includes details of the types of arguments. The values used with the function and advanced declaration statements called prototypes, which also provide this information, make it possible for the compiler to detect incorrect function use more easily.

Given the choice, it is ANSI C you should learn to use but, although nowadays all commercial C compilers are ANSI C compatible, several public domain offerings are not!

When you want to move on...

From a practical viewpoint, while C is still the mainstream language for Amiga programming it can also provide footholds for learning about other languages.

C++ (pronounced 'C plus plus'), is a C-styled object-oriented programming language developed during the early 1980s which supports a construct known as a 'Class' that allows programmers to define objects that have their own data characteristics and procedures.

The end result is that a programmer can work at a much higher level of abstraction and so avoid the nitty-gritty details that make coding larger projects difficult in other languages. It's best not to attempt to learn C++ until you are happy with C itself.

Those of you with an interest in the Web, incidentally, may like to know that the Java programming language, which net users are raving about, is (to a large extent) modelled on C++!

Bottom *line*

Product Details

Product	SAS C v6.51
Supplier	Software Hut
Price	$159.95
Tel	800 932 6442
email	softhut@ix.netcom.com

Coping with the inevitable snags

The best way to make a start is to write simple programs and get used to the general idea of writing the code, compiling, linking and so on.

If you follow the PD road, there's no doubt you will encounter more difficulties than someone who buys Storm C or the commercial version of DICE C.

Although most PD disks provide some help in getting you through those troublesome early stages it rarely seems to be enough. Initially, almost everyone will have some kind of problem with either the compiler itself or the related task of setting up a suitable compiling environment (mainly because the documentation will not be aimed directly at users who are new to compiling).

One solution, incidentally, is to make sure you get next month's *Amiga Computing* – because we're actually starting a series that is guaranteed to provide beginners with those all-important, step-by-step instructions!



Dave Cusick serves up a seasonal selection of PD and Shareware

"Acintya bheda bheda Tattva" moaned Sir John's grandson, Chrispian Mills, frontman for those rather superb musicians Kula Shaker. He wasn't talking rubbish, apparently it's a snippet of Sanskrit, the world's oldest recognised language and means "The simultaneous inconceivable difference and non-difference of reality".

How do I know this? Because I am the God of PeeDee. Being the God of PeeDee involves sitting for extended periods in front of a computer screen sifting through jiffy bags and Aminet upload lists, with nothing but a mug of tea and my trusty stereo for company. It might not be a barrel of laughs but certainly improves your knowledge of musical trivia.



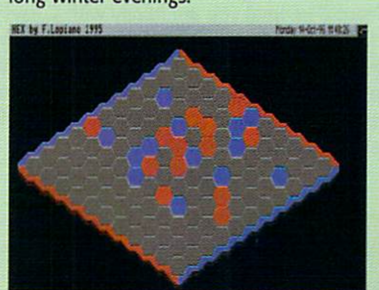
HEX

Programmed by: Fabio Lopiano
Available from: Aminet

I nearly got on Blockbusters, you know. I know two people who did get on it and won three or four gold runs whilst they were about it. The most disappointing aspect of my failure to impress the interviewer was I never got to meet Bob Holness. As Jo and Toby later confirmed, the man is an absolute star.

If you like the idea of two teams trying to get across a hexagonal grid in different directions, but aren't so keen on having to answer teasing general knowledge questions, Hex could be the answer. You won't get to mumble "P please Bob" (unless you are in the habit of saying such things to your Amiga) but you will get to consider the strategic element of plotting a route across the board.

Without flashy graphics and stunning sound, Hex relies on simplicity and playability to impress. It doesn't feature a single player mode so you will have to find a friend to rope into a strategic battle, but it's diverting enough to help while away a few long winter evenings.



"Flashing blue light on the board means you've got a chance!"

NATIONAL HUNT v3.0

Programmed by: Mark Winterton
Available from: Mark Winterton

Sue Barker's all right, isn't she? Admittedly she's no longer a spring chicken but hey, she's a snappy dresser and is fast maturing as an able sports presenter. She even managed an amusing joke or two after Sir Cliff's Singing In The Rain piece at Wimbledon last summer.

Strangely for a former tennis player, the powers that be at the Beeb have seen fit to let Sue Barker loose at numerous race meetings in recent times. That's not such a bad thing. She's so much less irritating than that McCrirrick chap on Channel Four - I'd like to see the straight-talking Geoff Boycott refer to him as "love" on a frequent basis during live broadcasts.

If you're an avid viewer of televised race meetings or perahps a lady or gentleman of leisure with sufficient time on your hands to toddle along to meetings for yourself, the chances are you'll like National Hunt. It's not as pleasing to the eye as Ms Barker was in her heyday, but beneath the Amos'ed exterior lurks a fairly absorbing game.

You take on the role of a newly appointed National Hunt race trainer and your task is to prepare horses for races and maybe earn the stable a bit of extra cash by prudently betting on winners from time to time. Ultimately you'll be aiming to win the Trainer's Championship and to help your jockey win the Jockey's Championship.

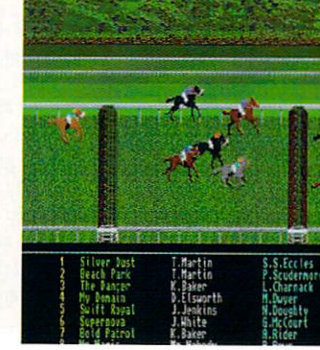
You have fifteen horses to look after, each is rated in several key areas - namely class, speed, stamina, fitness, preferred going, preferred distance, age and value. You decide which horses to enter in particular races and which horses should be trained up especially for certain meetings.

You also need to consider the form each horse displays. Once you've checked the odds the bookmakers are offering, you may want to put a bet on one of your own horses to win - or on one of the rival horses, if you're not so confident.

Obviously training horses costs money and there are bills to be paid. At the end of the season the taxman will pay a visit and whisk away some of your hard-earned pennies and if you run out of money at any stage, it's game over. On the other hand, prove to be a successful trainer and you can play season after season building up a personal fortune for retirement. Each season comprises 21 meetings, each with six races. There are nine other trainers to compete against and it's possible to edit jockey, trainer, horse and racetrack names.

The actual race sequences could scarcely be said to represent the cutting edge of audio visual technology, but it can be interesting watching your horse compete. Alternatively, skip the race itself and view the results straight away. To increase the tension the game even includes features such as disqualification, Steward's enquiries and photo finishes. National Hunt is shareware, with the full version available from the author for six quid. The demo version, which has several features disabled and only allows you to play for a single season, should be available from PD libraries although it can also be obtained directly from Mr Winterton.

Simulate that racecourse atmosphere on your Amiga



MUSCLES

Produced by: Impulse
Available from: Aminet

Regular readers will have noticed I rarely review demos - I simply don't see the point in the majority of them. It seems something of a waste when talented programmers spend their time producing endless wibbling spheres and jerky raytraced animations to highlight the technical features of the Amiga chipset, rather than employing their time more constructively to produce genuinely powerful software.

It's not showroom demos that sell machines, it's proper software, whether serious or recreational. It isn't pointless in-store "Look what this Pentium can do" rubbish that sells PCs by the bucketload, it's the fact that people want certain software titles.

All this is not to say that interesting, original and genuinely impressive demos are not worth a look once in a while. Muscles is a prime example. It lasts ages - when I began typing this particular review I began the demo again by way of inspiration, I'm well into it now and the thing is still running.

There are plenty of rotating 3-D objects, some decent artwork and slick but nondescript tracker music. For some reason it all seems to work rather well and goes beyond most demos in that, roughly speaking, it sticks to a theme throughout.

Let's talk hardware. You'll need a fair dollop of memory and hard drive space to run Muscles - the archive weighs in at a fairly hefty 4mb. On slower Amigas the whole thing can appear rather sluggish, but the vast majority of Amiga owners these days seem to possess 030, 040 or even 060 machines, so this may not be a problem.

Muscles won't change your life and it won't impress your friends with the two grand P200+ PeeCee, with its "innovative" Multimedia gubbins, huge RAM and Hard Drive requirements and that new fangled Windoze 95 thing called multitasking (what do you mean, doing two things at once? Why would anyone want to do that?) What Muscles will do is entertain you for a few minutes, and it may well make you feel a whole lot happier about the hardware inside that little cream box.



Muscles - nearly 4mb of fancy graphics and flashy effects

LAZY

If you're an Internet junkie who simply can't be bothered hunting around an Aminet mirror for the latest and greatest uploads, then pop in to the Public Sector web site at http://www.dcus-demon.co.uk/sector/sector.html. Here you'll find links to download sites for every bit of freely available PD and shareware reviewed in the two years I have been writing this column. And if you're so lazy that you can't even be bothered typing in that lengthy URL, simply follow the Software link from the Amiga Computing homepage.

EASYPRINT

Programmed by: Andrea Latina
Available from: Aminet

Printing is something of an Achilles heel for the Amiga. Decent DTP programs and word processors can produce high quality output, but try printing from an ordinary art package (or from Workbench itself) and you'll end up with less than spectacular results.

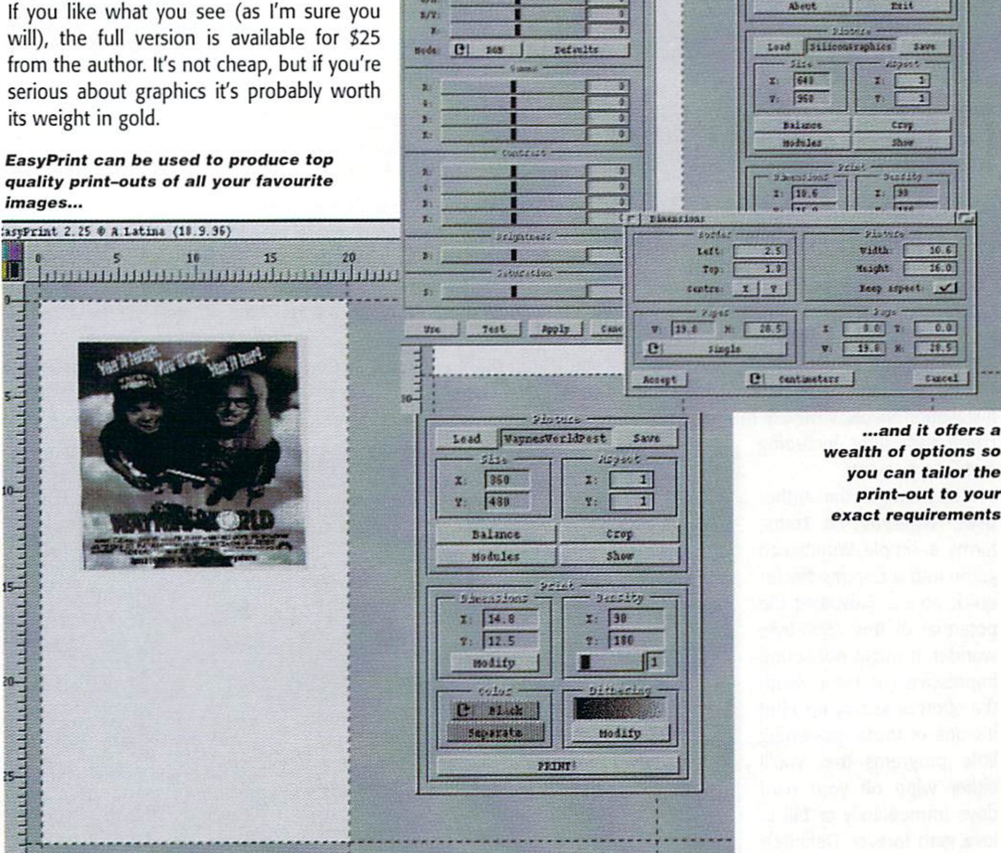
EasyPrint offers an attractive solution giving superb results from even mediocre printers and low-end Amiga systems. With a standard A1200 it is possible to print out 24-bit coloured pictures on an A4 page at the maximum density.

Installation is simply a matter of copying a couple of important library files into the libs: drawer (if you don't already have them) and making sure the standard system preferences are set correctly for your printer. Double click on the EasyPrint icon and load up the image you'd like to print out - EasyPrint recognises and loads IFF, EHB, HAM6, HAM7, HAM8 and JPEG formats and can use any installed datatypes.

You can crop the image, play around with the colour mode (CMYK or RGB), adjust the balance, contrast and gamma levels and even apply some simple image manipulation features if you wish. Then it's just a case of setting the print-out size and choosing whether you want colour separations or the printout to be dithered. When all this is done, hit the print button and you'll be suitably impressed by the output.

The EasyPrint interface is particularly attractive and intuitive, with all the features accessible from a floating window. A preview of the image is displayed alongside rulers to help you gauge the print-out size and lengthy operations are monitored in little progress windows so you know where things are up to.

This is a superb product which will be invaluable to anyone who has ever had cause to curse the standard Amiga print-out. It's shareware, with the evaluation version having some features disabled. If you like what you see (as I'm sure you will), the full version is available for $25 from the author. It's not cheap, but if you're serious about graphics it's probably worth its weight in gold.



EasyPrint can be used to produce top quality print-outs of all your favourite images...

...and it offers a wealth of options so you can tailor the print-out to your exact requirements

Amiga Assist 3.1

Programmed by: John Cummings
Available from: 5th Dimension
Licenceware

If you're relatively new to the Amiga and the terms bandied around by experienced users leave you baffled, invest £3.45 in this disk. It's an introduction to the more confusing aspects of everyone's favourite machine and covers everything from the various models in the Amiga range and the upgrades available for them, through to instructions on using Workbench and creating script files. It runs on any Amiga with 2mb of RAM.

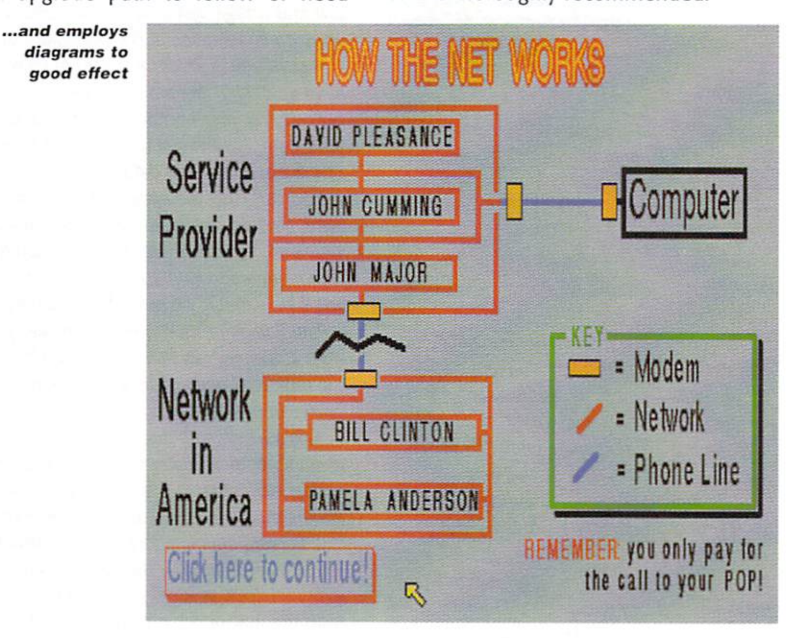
From the main menu it's simply a case of clicking on the subject you'd like to know more about and reading an informative, well-written text file – the advice can be printed out. Some subjects are accompanied by clear diagrams and illustrations. In fact, the whole guide is well presented and easy to digest.

Even relatively experienced users may learn something here, the author gets to grips with a lot of interesting topics. Whether you want to know about the best upgrade path to follow or need advice on how to get connected to the Internet, you'll find good advice here. There's also a really comprehensive A-Z jargon buster with helpful definitions of all sorts of terms.

This latest version of Amiga Assist has been updated to incorporate recent developments in the Amiga market, so you'll find newer hardware such as the Surf Squirrel and software like Active's Netconnect discussed too. This is an indispensable disk for the newcomer and is thoroughly recommended.

Monitors
o SERIOUS USERS
If you are using your Amiga for business or seriously then the best and consequently the most expensive monitors available are multisync. Amiga Technologies have developed their own Amiga multisync monitor called the M1438S and has an RRP of £299.
* DRIVING YOU MAD! (MULTISYNC MONITORS ONLY!) * * * * * * * * * * * * *
To use a multisync monitor properly you need a suitable monitor driver to take advantage of all the screenmodes it offers.
To setup a monitor driver for use:
1) Copy the suitable monitor driver from the WB Storage disk into the Monitors drawer inside the Devs drawer.
2) Then edit your Startup-Sequence by typing "ed s:startup-sequence" from a CLI. Then after the ASSIGNs add
RUN >NIL: DEVS:MONITORS/<NAME OF DRIVER>
Menu Picture Guide Print Help

Amiga Assist explains things clearly and simply...



...and employs diagrams to good effect

MakeCX

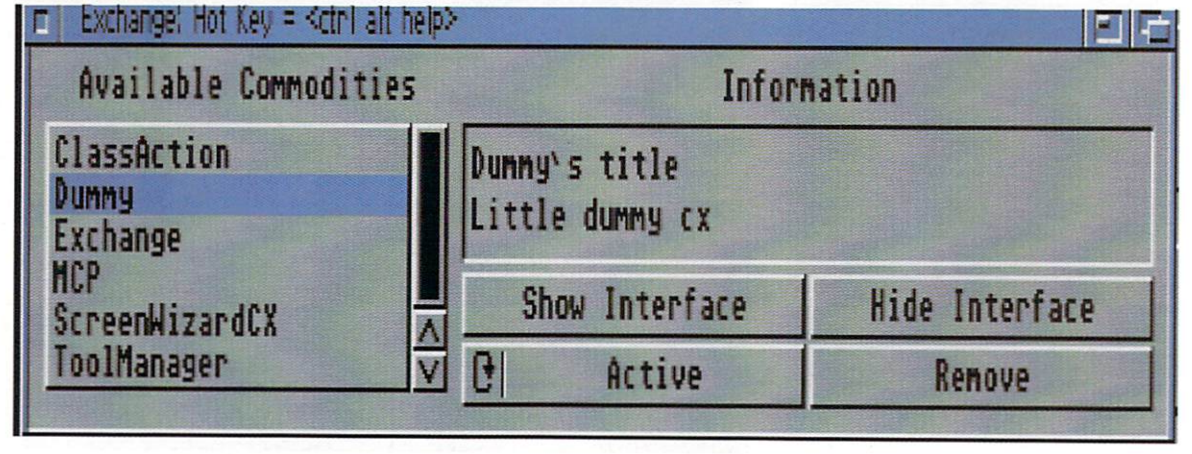
Programmed by: Jens Troger
Available from: Aminet

Commodore did quite a good job with later versions of Workbench. By the time Workbench 3 came along, it featured several nice ideas such as Datatypes and Commodities. Admittedly the appalling manual included with A1200s did not really open many people's eyes to the potential of these features (hence the popularity of various third party books on how to get the best out of Workbench), but Commodore had the right idea.

MakeCX is a handy little program enabling you to run other programs as Commodities. This makes it possible to call up programs with hotkeys, hide their interfaces when initially run, and de-activate or remove them easily. Installation involves merely moving MakeCX to somewhere like the C: drawer. Usage is then a matter of entering a command line including certain arguments.

The example the author uses, whereby he transforms a simple Workbench game into a Commodity for quick access, illustrates the potential of this 7500-byte wonder. It might not sound impressive (or even worth the effort of setting up!) but it's one of those interesting little programs that you'll either wipe off your hard drive immediately or fall in love with forever. Definitely one to investigate.

Turn all your favourite programs into Commodities with MakeCX





British Manager

Programmed by: Gordon Miller
Available from: 5th Dimension Licenceware

The effect of Euro 96 on the British population has been nothing short of frightening. When I squeezed into a pub in Newquay to watch England v Germany in the European Championship semi-final, I was totally surprised by the people there.

In my experience, football games (both in the flesh and in the pub) had always attracted a certain kind of person. Euro 96 changed all that which, I reflected as I stood fighting for a view and gasping for breath in an overcrowded Sheffield bar watching England beat Poland the other night, makes a big difference. When I was a lad, you used to be able to get tickets to see Manchester United...

It's nice that so many people have caught the football bug. After spending most of the eighties in the wilderness, football really has become our national sport once again.



Who needs Championship Manager?

Experienced computer users will remember that long before the likes of Championship Manager were available to satisfy footie fans' appetites, an 8-bit classic by the name of Football Manager had plenty of people excited. Admittedly realism wasn't one of Football Manager's strong points but entertainment and - amazingly for a program written in Basic on a 48k machine - arcade sequences were.

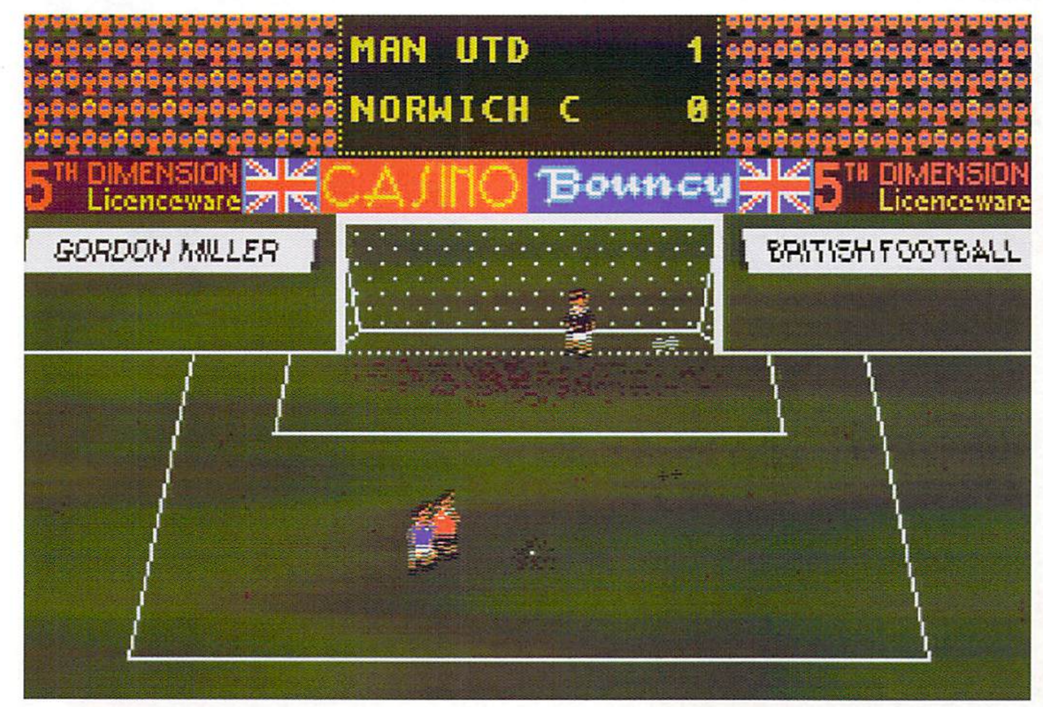
After the great British summer of sport, it's nice to see another attempt at producing a playable Football Manager clone costing a fraction of the price of commercial offerings. Forget realism - we're talking about a league containing four divisions of ten teams, from all corners of Britain. Millwall and Sheffield Wednesday rub shoulders with Hamilton and Ayr in the British Third Division.

Enjoy reliving the days of buying and selling fictitious players in a desperate attempt to climb up the league. (Yes, you too can spend £127,668 to bring P Aitken to Manchester United!) Marvel at the sight of appallingly animated characters scoring simple goals during tense match sequences – penalties! free kicks! silky-smooth passing moves! It's like owning a Spectrum all over again.

As well as league fixtures you have a chance to compete for the coveted British FA Cup and British League Cup titles. There are other interesting features too, increase the capacity of the stadium or change ticket prices so as to attract floating supporters or fund expensive transfer swoops. There are substitutions, injuries, suspensions, a full transfer market and so on. In an inspired move, the author has even included an Editor program on the disk, so you can recreate your favourite teams and guide them to domestic glory.

The bottom line is that while it's certainly not a realistic rival to Championship Manager, British Manager is a hugely entertaining return trip to 8-bit gaming brilliance. Those were the days, when you could pick up a decent game for about three quid – which incidentally is all this gloriously old-fashioned game costs.

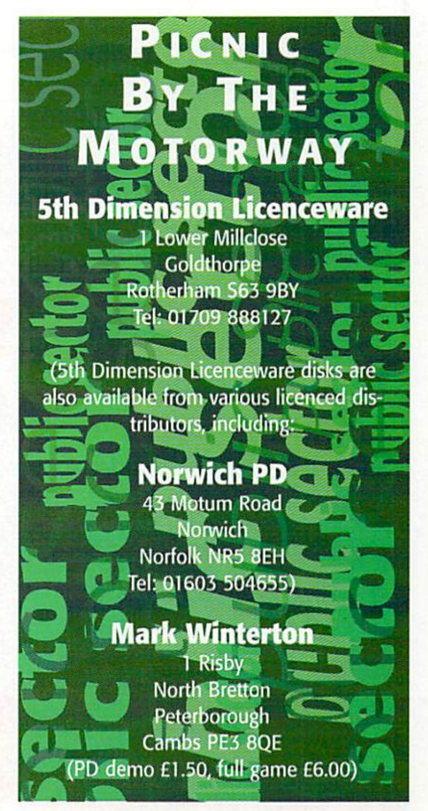
British Manager takes on Match Of The Day at its own game



The Chemistry Between Us

If you want to see your program reviewed in Public Sector, I want to hear from you now. Whether it will be freely distributable public domain, shareware or licenceware, if you feel it's of sufficient quality to merit coverage, stick it in a jiffy bag or padded envelope and send it in with all haste. Although Public Sector receives too many submissions to cover them all, I promise I'll at least look at your work - even if it's yet another Lottery program or Klondike cardset. It does make my job a lot easier if disks are clearly labelled. Please also include a covering letter detailing the disk contents and price and giving some basic instructions. The magic address is:

Dave Cusick
PD submissions
Amiga Computing
Media House
Adlington Park
Macclesfield SK10 4NP



Picnic By The Motorway

5th Dimension Licenceware
1 Lower Millclose
Goldthorpe
Rotherham S63 9BY
Tel: 01709 888127

(5th Dimension Licenceware disks are also available from various licenced distributors, including:

Norwich PD
43 Motum Road
Norwich
Norfolk NR5 8EH
Tel: 01603 504655)

Mark Winterton
1 Risby
North Bretton
Peterborough
Cambs PE3 8QE
(PD demo £1.50, full game £6.00)



Rumours of my demise have been greatly exaggerated

Worms: The Director's Cut

Inside: Tiny Troops, Ruffian, Cheat Guides

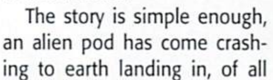


News by **Andy Maddock** & **Hugh Poynton**

What the hell?

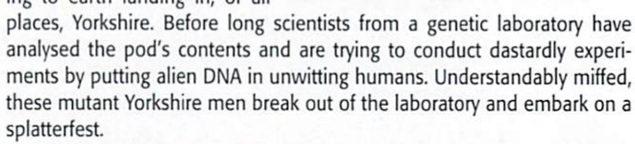
You may have heard through the grapevine that our sister magazine, Amiga Action, was going to close. Well, we thought it would be a good idea to merge Amiga Action into the centre of Amiga Computing so in actual fact, you're almost getting two magazines for the price of one! Despite the merging of the two, Amiga Action will still present you with the news, previews and reviews of all the latest games as it always has done. There's just one thing left more to say. Amiga Computing readers, meet all our new Amiga Action readers... There we go, everyone is happy!

Emmerdale Harm

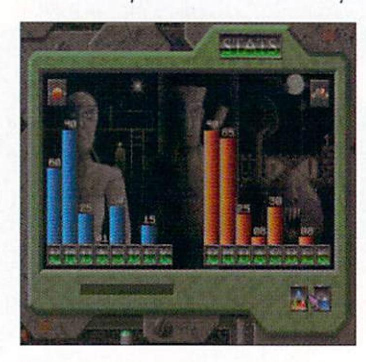


The Amiga is nowadays largely ignored by many of the larger software companies. Whilst this is a shame, it does present a golden opportunity to many of the smaller, home-grown software developers. Applaud is one of these new up and coming companies, and DNA is its first release.

The story is simple enough, an alien pod has come crashing to earth landing in, of all places, Yorkshire. Before long scientists from a genetic laboratory have analysed the pod's contents and are trying to conduct dastardly experiments by putting alien DNA in unwitting humans. Understandably miffed, these mutant Yorkshire men break out of the laboratory and embark on a splatterfest.



Only two telepathically linked people can save Yorkshire from being dominated by irate mutants and it is your task to guide them around the playing area, killing the mutants and collecting samples from them. Once this is done chunks of alien DNA can be inserted into your operatives to enhance their fighting ability. Applaud Software has only just been established and DNA is only available through mail order. The retail price of DNA is £14.99 plus postage and packing. If you wish to contact Applaud, telephone 01283 217270.



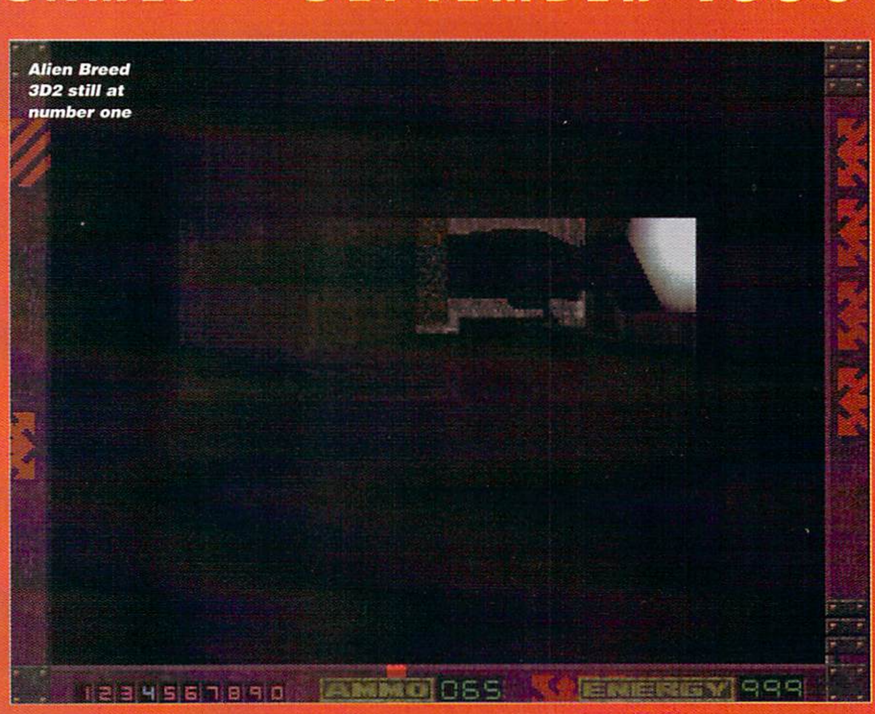


GTI's Top Ten Games - September 1996

1. (1) Killing Grounds AGA
2. (6) Sensible World of Soccer
3. (10) Worms
4. (-) Nemac IV
5. (4) Fighting Spirit
6. (7) Tin Toy Adventure
7. (-) Der Produzent
8. (-) Extreme Racing AGA
9. (-) Gloom Deluxe
10. (-) Formula 1 Masters

The current games charts supplied by the great German distributor, GTI. show that Alien Breed 3D 2 still remains at number one for the second consecutive month despite only receiving 80% in the last issue of Amiga Computing.

Also, we see re-entries for Extreme Racing and Gloom Deluxe. Sensible World of Soccer still remains in the top ten after many months and doesn't look likely to budge after zooming from 6th place straight to number 2.



Alien Breed 3D2 still at number one

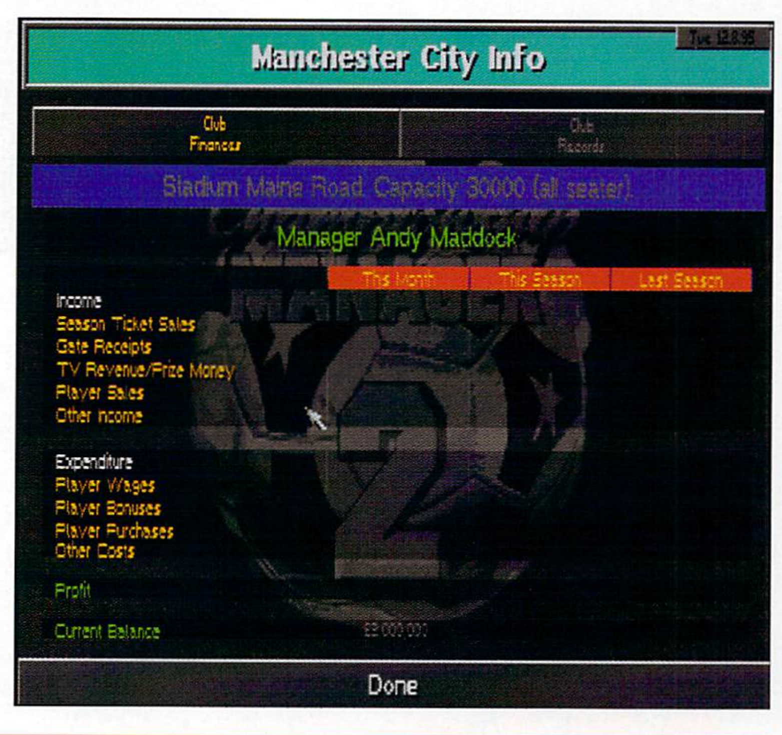
Ooh, it's here!

As you know, we have been following the progression of Championship Manager 2 very closely and I know a lot of readers are anxious to find out how the game will be converted from the PC. Transferring an 8MB game to 1MB can't be an easy task and the question begs to be asked... Will it work on a A500?

At the moment, the game is more or less complete so anyone who has pre-ordered the game is in for a top treat. The only aspects disabled in the version we played were the save game, transfers and the disk routine. We are assured the game, that comes on two disks, will work on the A500 and support two disk drives.

The only major gripe was that selecting West Bromwich Albion as your team made the game crash after the third match. Ooh, pity.

Expect to see it on the shelves some time in November, just hang in there and be patient.



Championship Manager 2 – on it's way still

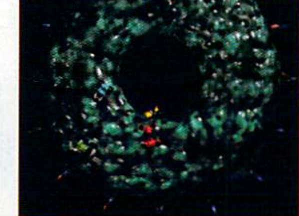
Or just fade away

Vulcan Software is planning on releasing a fair few games over the coming months. We've heard that one of them is called Burnout.

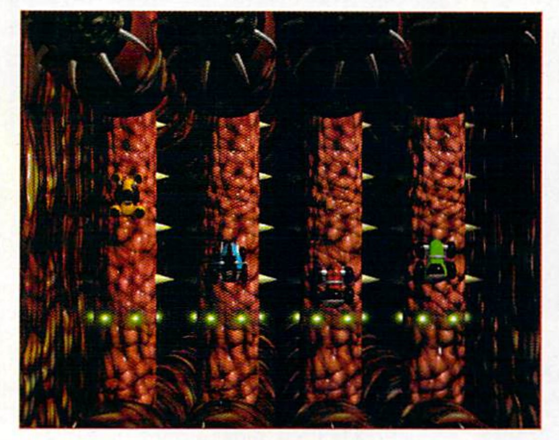
The idea is to knock a series of opposition cars off a circular platform and remain the only one left. The graphics are all 100 per cent rendered which could make it a sure success as there are very few games around today which use proper 3–D rendered graphics.

The game will be compatible with AGA Amiga's, but you will need 6MB of memory to play it. It will come on 7 disks and work only on a hard drive. Despite these awkward technical specifications Burnout will run in HiRes Interlaced with 256 colours at 25 frames per second, 6 channels of sound, multiplayer options, future expansion disks and oodles of playability. It sounds like an absolute cracker.

The next game to be released will hopefully be around January 1997 and is to be named Hell Pigs. Although no technical specifications have been released yet, the game will be state of the art. Vulcan will be bringing out an Amiga CD with hundreds of megs of filmed sequences, speech and actors. There will be strong language used and Hell Pigs will be Certificate 18. We're looking forward to it.








Burnout will look as visually spectacular as all the graphics have been rendered

The unique graffiti feature...





...And the finished product

Hugh Poynton faces warrior worms, flying death sheep, mad cows and ornamental pack animals

Worms, The Director's Cut

Team 17 has accomplished a very difficult feat, namely improving an already excellent product to give us Worms, The Directors Cut. In terms of graphics, variety and scope, the game is an absolute peach. Both spec-wise and option-wise the game is pretty impressive. 300 colours on screen, 50 frames a second, 9 level parallax and super smooth quarter pixel scrolling is combined with an almost unlimited number of options and





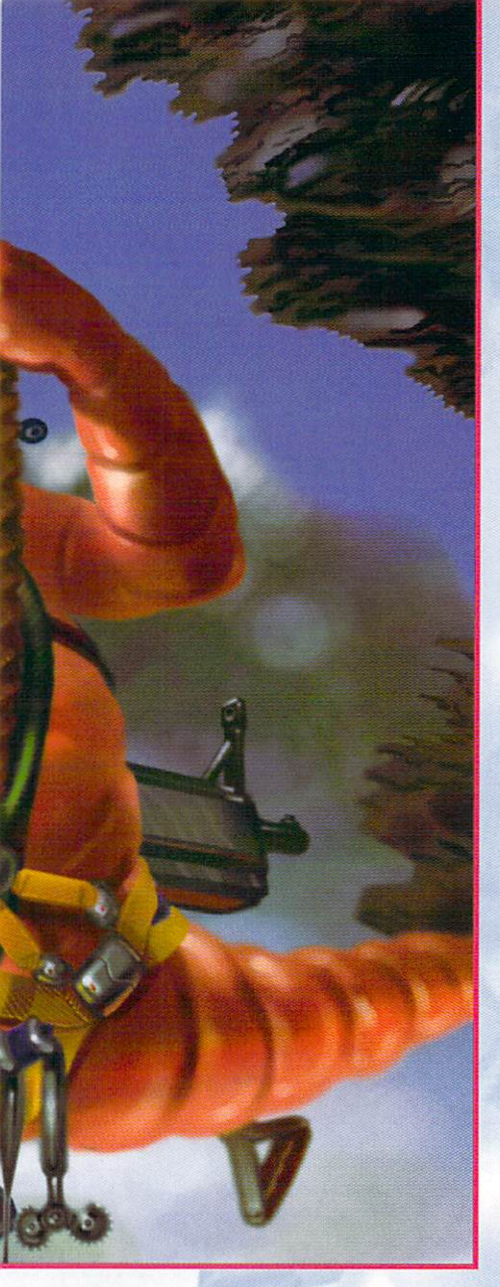
embellishments.

The real strength of this new worms release and what makes it stand out from the original, is the sheer scope afforded by the vast amount of new options. The 'Graffiti Mode' enables players to fight it out on an infinite number of battlefields. Using this little device the player can squiggle about with a mouse, write offensive words or pictures of the human anatomy, press a couple of buttons and transform their work of art into a worm battlefield. Players have the choice to determine whether their graffiti creation will be above ground or in the same shape of caverns deep under ground. The Amiga will dress your creation with trees, houses and a picturesque back drop to look like a proper bona-fide wormy battlefield.

Invincible Invertibrates

This isn't the only new options feature by a long shot - the game is absolutely packed with them. Before playing you can set the lethality of every weapon. You can choose short skirmishes with ultra deadly weapons or an epic protracted battle with weapons about as lethal as a feather duster. On the subject of weapons, the range available is huge.

Whilst the original worms had a selection of comparatively unremarkable weapons, this little beauty uses the weirdest weapons ever seen in a game. Sheep for example, are definitely a force to be



reckoned with. The all–new Super Sheep is a deadly accurate flying sheep that, by using the cursors, can be directed around the battlefield at breakneck speed and sent careering into the enemies' worms.

The Ninja-esqe Sheep–on–a–Rope will strike terror into the hearts of worms as they swing, Spiderman style, across the screen and drop on unfortunate wormy warriors. In addition to the sheep, exploding old women can be sent on suicide missions, they totter up to unsuspecting worms and explode.

However, the best weapons additions are the little topical embellishments such as the postal strike (five presumably overdue letters which drift down from the sky and wreak destruction). Mad cows bound with







mental enthusiasm into the nearest obstacle and blow it to bits and using two or three of these will destroy an obstacle a worm is hiding behind and subsequent cows will blow the worm itself away.

The French nuclear testing option is probably the best though. Using this ecologically unfriendly tactic, explode a nuke to the tune of the French national anthem and watch the battlefield slip, Muratora Atoll style, a few feet into the sea, drowning any worm unfortunate enough to be in the way of the rising waters.

Some of the worms seem to be developing a certain urban combat gangsta style approach to their battle tactics. Although not driving about in chopped and lowered Mercedes 190s with huge airfoils at the back and tinted out windows, worms are now able to smack their opponents about with baseball bats or chuck petrol bombs at them.

At this point I should perhaps mention something about the rumoured appearance of a freaky looking 70s Garden ornament made out of highest quality concrete. But I won't because its just a rumour...alright?

Subhead

The little pink heroes are much improved and filled out in this version. An unlimited number of worm teams can be saved and each of the battle worms have their own unique speech. Just think, Jessica Lange's swan song would be the 'Murder She Wrote' theme or Begbie worm could utter 'Renton ya wee radge' before shuffling his mortal worm coil. If you own a sampler there is the option to add your own pearls of wisdom for the worm to utter in moments of triumph or terror.

Another added touch to the new worms and one which brings a tear to my eye and makes me talk in a faltering croaky voice, is the ability to save all your worms, give them names and celebrate their birthdays. Thing is, can you face getting attached when the next moment they could be annihilated by an exploding granny or destroyed by a Ninja Sheep on a Rope?

It appears this game has achieved something unique in modern computer games. By enabling players to decide the battlefield, the lethality of the weapons and even the speech of the individual worms, Andy Davidson has designed the game so it can be tailored exactly to the requirements of the individual. This, coupled with the fact that the game can be played via a network or modem, more or less guarantees that for years to come the game will be constantly adapted and customised by its fans.



I could go on about everything new and unique in 'Worms, The Directors Cut' for ages; about the worm to worm 'prod' ability (where the player can gently shove an opposing worm off cliffs and ridges) or the networking and modem facilities or that you can have up to 16 people playing in any one game, but I just don't have the time.

The truth is, Andy Davidson has breathed years of new life into a game that didn't really need that much new life breathed in to it in the first place. Whilst retaining the playability of the original game, The Directors Cut has refined and polished the product to an almost unsurpassable degree.



THE LOW-DOWN

PUBLISHER Team 17
CONTACT 01924 267776
HD INSTALLABLE Yes
PRICE TBA

GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	96%
PLAYABILITY	96%
DIFFICULTY	Tricky

Worms has acres of playability, a huge selection of features and an infinite numbe levels. In short, worms is wiggly pink perfection.

REVIEWED BY HUGH

OVERALL SCORE

96%

Ruffian

ANDY MADDOCK takes a look at Ruffian Software's latest platformer

Very few developers are willing to devote time and money to producing an Amiga game when they can quite easily develop for the PC and compete with the larger companies – although, this means the competition to occupy the top spot is a lot stronger. Developers who tend to put in the time and effort for Amiga games usually end up with a good, positive result as there is still a very large number of Amiga gamesplayers out there to substantiate a good release.

Ruffian, is a platform game and you control a jungle boy who's been given a mission by a witch doctor. The mission is to save little pixies from being eaten by carnivorous plants. To set them free you must spit seeds at them which you can collect from fruit along the way. That's not all. Once you have saved a certain number of pixies, the exit will open somewhere on the level for you to find.

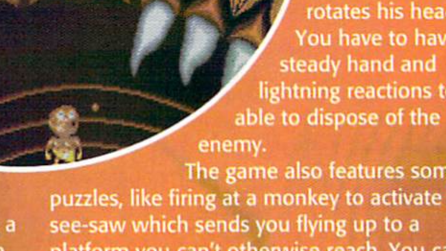
It may sound pretty straightforward, but there are a vast number of baddies who will try and get in your way, spiky platforms which must be negotiated and rivers which need to be avoided.

To help in your quest the witch doctor has left a number of potions and spells which act as power-ups to boost your chances of finishing a level while topping up your points total in the process.





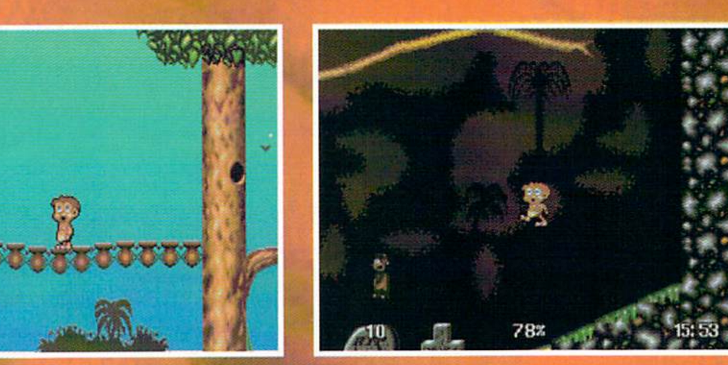
Before beginning you can configure the game to your own particular preference by altering the speed of Ruffian or the main difficulty level. You can also turn off the helping hands which are there to point you in the right direction as it's very easy to get lost.



Ruffian also uses a clever method of spitting pips. Instead of just pressing fire you have to hold down the button and rotate the joystick which rotates his head. You have to have a steady hand and lightning reactions to be able to dispose of the enemy.

The game also features some puzzles, like firing at a monkey to activate a see-saw which sends you flying up to a platform you can't otherwise reach. You can also bounce pips off the wall to backfire through tiny gaps to kill enemies or rescue pixies.

Overall, Ruffian is an excellent platform game. The graphics are good, the sounds are atmospheric and the gameplay is surprisingly involving. The only major gripe is that it can get a tad boring and frustrating after a short time. If you've got the patience Ruffian is certainly a worthy purchase.



THE LOW-DOWN

PUBLISHER Ruffian Software
CONTACT 0121-625 3377
HD INSTALLABLE No
PRICE TBA

GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	85%
DIFFICULTY	Hard

As Ruffian has little or no competition whatsoever, it looks like it's going to have some sucess. My only major problem with the game itself is that the whole thing is based around a jungle scene, and that's it. It would've been nice if it contained some variation. Maybe, Space Ruffian?

REVIEWED BY *ANDY*

OVERALL SCORE

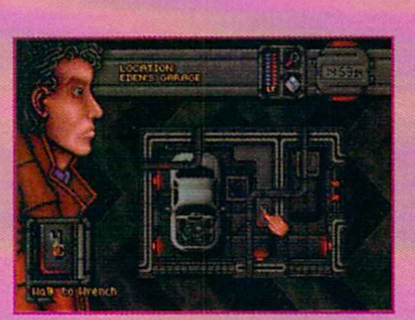
84%

Giving The Gam

Dreamweb

Yes, it's here. The final part of that superb futuristic arcade adventure courtesy of Creative Reality.







After killing Sartani you'll be transported back to the Dreamweb. Talk to the Keeper and he'll explain the next objective. Leave the web by placing your hands on the correct stone door. Use the key on the plinth to return to your own dimension.

In the car park, find the van with tarpaulin in the back of it. Take the wire cutters from the back of the vehicle and then have a look in your inventory. Read the papers you stole from Sartani's briefcase. This document will indicate the whereabouts of Chapel and Underwood.

First go to Chapel's house. Find and talk to the policeman. Chapel's house has been bombed, but you must find a way in. Go back to the other screen and then examine and use the wall. Among the destruction is a picture of a church and more importantly a blue cartridge. Take this network cartridge and go back to your flat.

Once there, use the freshly-acquired cartridge inside the network console. Logon as Beckett and enter the password "Septimus". Read what's on the cartridge to reveal where the church is.

Leave the flat and go to the church. Once there, the way is blocked by a gate – use the wire cutters on it to enter the forecourt. The wooden doors are locked, so leave the church for now.

Head back to Eden's flat and pick up an empty mug from the kitchen and leave. Underwood's boathouse is the next port of call. Once there examine the pipe in the water and then use it with the empty mug. At the top of the screen are some railings – examine them and you'll be able to pick up a broken shard of railing. Walk right to see the boathouse.

Using the balcony at this point will activate the security system and you'll get a laser blast through the stomach – game over. Examine the metal plate at the top of the screen. Use the metal plate and Ryan will brush off some of the sand to reveal an electrical junction box.

Use the metal plate with the railing and the junction box with open. Use the mug filled with water on the box and the security system will short-circuit and explode. You can now use the hole to climb up on to the balcony. Find the hole in the window and climb through it to enter the boathouse.

Underwood can be found crawling along the floor in some considerable pain as half her body is missing. Talk to her and once you've got the information put her out of her misery by shooting her in the head. Her soul will enter your body and once again you'll be transported to the Dreamweb.

Once inside the Dreamweb talk to the Keeper and he'll explain the next objective. Locate the correct stone door and once again use the key on the plinth to be transported back to Earth. This time on waking up you'll be further along on the beach. This might be an ideal time to have a look at your inventory and see which objects are not needed any more. Most of the specific







e Away

items used previously (i.e. keycards, passcards) can be thrown away.

Go back to the church to find that the doors are, miraculously, now open. Enter the church, walk past the remains and find the altar. Take both candlesticks and the white cloth off the altar. Try and use the altar and it just won't budge. Examine the hole in the altar and you'll see that a hand will fit inside it. Walk back to the remains and take the bony hand from the body. Use this hand on the altar and then use the altar itself. Ryan with a great deal of effort will shove the altar out of the way revealing a hole in the floor.

Go down the hole and examine the tomb. Use it and the lid will pull back to reveal two red crystals, a dagger and a rock. Take all these items. Look inside the jar beside the tomb to find another red crystal.

There is a stone design behind you on the floor with three holes in it. Place the three red crystals into the appropriate holes and a hidden door will open allowing you to leave the tomb. Have a look around the corridor – the way is blocked by a gate.

Head to the top of the corridor and examine the statue. Use the statue and a puzzle will appear. Rotate the symbols to match the one which appears on your Dreamweb key. This design can be found in the Diary of a Madman which comes free with the game, but to save time, the top half of the symbol looks like a semi-circle with three spokes jutting out from it while the bottom half is a plain semi-circle.

Once the two symbols are correctly matched push the crystal in the top of the statue. You'll hear the gate open in the distance. Walk through the gate and to the end of the corridor. The door at the bottom left of the screen requires a triangular key of some kind.

Go up and find a trolley. Walk around the corridor complex and you'll see loads of rocks scattered around. Pick them up, there should be eight (including the one from the tomb) in all. Once you've found them all, place them in the trolley.

Use the trolley and Ryan will give it an almighty push and it'll fly off the screen towards the door. The screen will shake and you'll hear a crash. Walk down towards the door – it's now open. Walk through the door and head through the left hand passage and up the stone steps.

You'll find the priest, but he's already changed from human form into something else and all that's left are his alien remains. Now your attention must turn to Beckett the psychopath.

Force yourself through the small hole which lies directly to the right. In the storeroom, move left and somehow you're now inside a subway. Go upwards and on to the actual train track. Head north until you find a gap in the left hand wall. Go through it and you'll bump into Beckett.

After talking to the madman he will try to kill you. Run back towards the door and lure Beckett on to the train track. A subway train will run him over and you'll be whisked off to the Dreamweb for the last time. All that's left to do now is sit back and watch the end sequence because this fabulous adventure is now complete.















Dreamweb

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Slamtilt
Publisher: 21st Century Entertainment
Contact: 01235 851852
Genre: Pinball sim
Overall Score: 90%
"There has been no compromise on gameplay, graphics or sound and you immediately get the feeling of a polished product".

Designed for

Andy Maddock takes a look back at the year which was most affected by the entire Amiga situation and reflects on the past successes

I'm sure everyone would agree if I said that 1996 has been a slightly eventful year for the Amiga games scene. We've seen companies like Ocean, Gremlin, Time Warner, Acclaim, Anco, Electronic Arts, Konami, MicroProse, Psygnosis, US Gold and Virgin disappear completely from the Amiga.

We've seen companies who have stuck it out and supported the platform like Vulcan Software and surprisingly we've seen new companies like ClickBoom and Ruffian Software appear to develop good quality games even when the actual market is at its lowest point.

What can we expect from 1997? Who knows? All I can say for now is... let the good old times roll again.

Here is a complete list of the Amiga's greatest releases of 1996. We've included a contact number if you are having difficulty finding the software in the shops. If the person on the other end can't sell you one, I'm sure they'll be able to point you in the right direction.

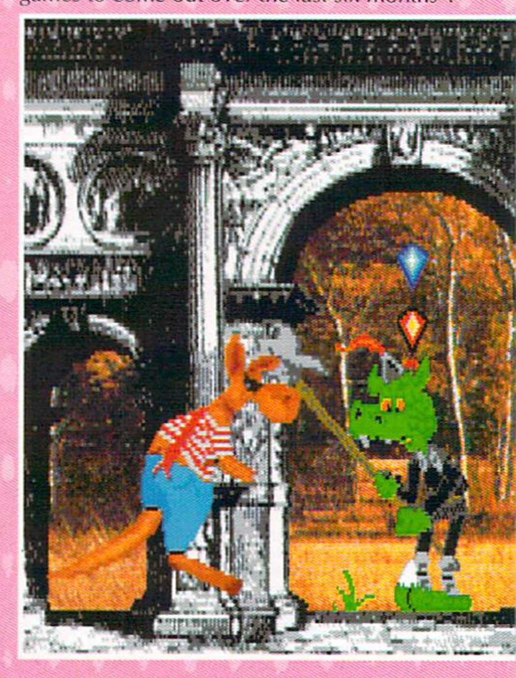
You may notice that we've had to leave some games out because of the restricted space, although we have tried to include as many of our office favourites as possible.

Watchtower
Publisher: OTM
Contact: 01827 312302
Genre: Arcade
Overall Score: 89%
"Watchtower excels in its playability. It's just like taking a trip down to the arcade to battle out a few hours of Commando".

Total Football
Publisher: Domark
Contact: 0181 780 2222
Genre: Arcade football
Overall Score: 81%
"The computer seems to enjoy taking the ball off the end of your boot and storming forward to smash the ball into the back of the net".

XP8
Publisher: WeatherMine Software
Contact: 01372 276042
Genre: Shoot 'em up
Overall Score: 90%
"The programmers describe it as "Banshee with sugared Stardust on top". You can see why too".

Kang Fu
Publisher: Alter Intersective
Contact: (+31) 546 817727
Genre: Platform
Overall Score: 80%
"It's certainly one of the better platform games to come out over the last six months".



Kick Off '96
Publisher: Anco
Contact: 01322 292513
Genre: Arcade football
Overall Score: 86%
"It has enough interesting options, views, gameplay and pace to make it a game worth buying".



Alien Breed 3D - Killing Grounds
Publisher: Team 17
Contact: 01924 267 776
Genre: Doom Clone
Overall Score: 80%
"To be honest, everyone in the office agreed that it wasn't as good as we had imagined. Don't get me wrong; it's not a bad game, it still presents a really good challenge".



Premier Manager 3 - Deluxe
Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
Contact: 01142 753 423
Genre: Football Management
Overall Score: 92%
"It's like a luxury version of Premier Manager 3 because it comes with fabled Multi Edit System".

TOP GOAL SCORERS

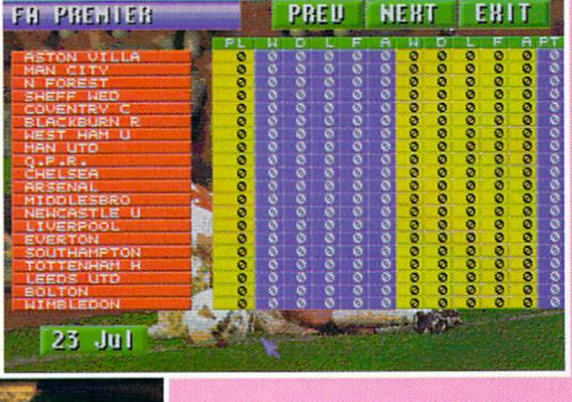
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3	GARY BULL	(YORK CITY)	3	0	0	3
4	MARTYN CHALK	(WREXHAM)	3	0	0	3
5	NICKY FORSTER	(BRENTFORD)	3	0	0	3
6	DENNY MUNDEE	(BRIGHTON)	3	0	0	3
7	ROB SAVAGE	(CREWE ALEXANDRA)	3	0	0	3
8	PAUL SHOWLER	(BRADFORD CITY)	3	0	0	3
9	TONY AGANA	(NOTTS COUNTY)	2	0	0	2
10	JUNIOR BENT	(BRISTOL CITY)	2	0	0	2
11	CARL HEGGS	(SWANSEA CITY)	2	0	0	2
12	KYLE LIGHTBOURNE	(WALSALL)	2	0	0	2
13	GLENN NAYLOR	(YORK CITY)	2	0	0	2
14	IAN RICHARDSON	(NOTTS COUNTY)	2	0	0	2
15	MIGUEL DE SOUZA	(WYCOMBE WDRS)	2	0	0	2

EXIT

Sensible World of Soccer - Euro '96 Edition
Publisher: Time Warner Interactive
Contact: 0171 391 4300
Genre: Football/Management
Overall Score: 92%
"All the features which have been included were there and to top things off, all the players' data including values and skilled are updated".

Life

Tracksuit Manager 2
Publisher: Alternative Software
Contact: 01977 797777
Genre: Football Management
Overall Score: 87%
"If you think you can put up with the awful match screens then there's enough detail here to satisfy you to make up for it".



Valhalla - Fortress of Eve
Publisher: Vulcan Software
Contact: 01705 67029
Genre: Adventure
Overall Score: 92%
"You can't fail to be impressed with the amount of sampled speech - and there aren't many games which take advantage of the Amiga's ability to do this".





Capital Punishment
Publisher: ClickBOOM
Contact: 001 416 868 6388
Genre: Beat 'em up
Overall Score: 95%
"Fans of Body Blows cannot fail to be impressed with Capital Punishment's overall quality. It wipes the floor with the likes of Body Blows, Mortal Kombat and Team 17's Shadow Fighter".

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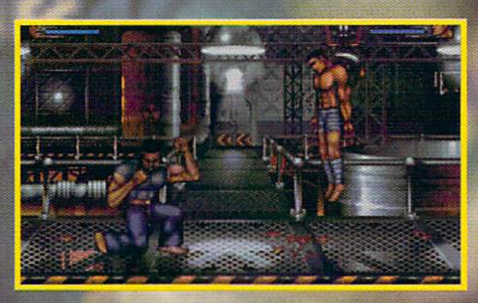
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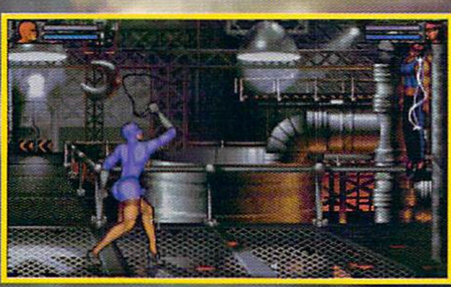


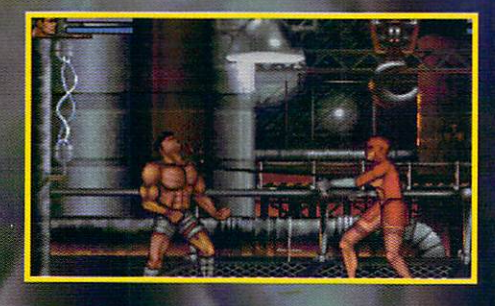
Win a fabulous and trendy T-Shirt to wear around the streets. Win a massive poster to decorate your bedroom and finally get your hands on the game!

You're all in for a special treat this month because ClickBOOM, the Canadian developers of Capital Punishment, have kindly given us 10 goodie packs for some lucky Amiga Action/Computing readers. The game pack consists of a game, a T-shirt and a massive poster.

Capital Punishment, at 95%, was the highest rated game since the birth of System. It needs a hard drive, so make sure you own one before you enter the competition. Also, you have to be over 16, as there is some disturbing content or rather a scantily clad young lady. So write down your real age. Yeah right.







Competition entry form

QUESTIONS

Question 1
Name the four main Capital Punishment characters?
1) ....
2) ....
3) ....
4) ....

Question 2
What is the name of the Evil Emperor?
1) ....

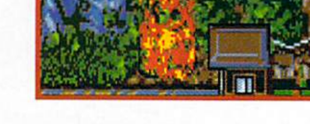
Question 3
How many players can take part in the game?
1) ....

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Funky Furfur, far right shows of his stylish Helicopter Hat, fresh from the cat-walks of Paris

Rumble in the Jungle... well, flowerbed

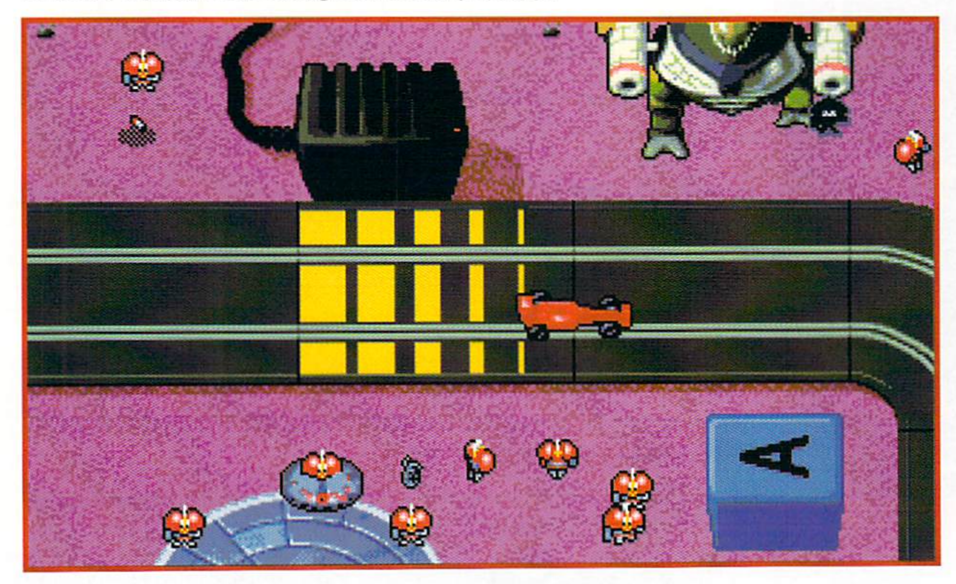
Tiny Troops

Hugh Poynton confronts Vulcan's invading killer critters...

How's this for a game plot; a planet full of homicidal little smurf-type warriors decide after 450 years of non-stop war that perhaps their planet might be a little on the battered side. These deceptively cute little critters are a bit put out over this but they face the sizeable quandry that to carry on fighting will destroy the planet, but to stop fighting will be basically...boring. They wisely decide that it is probably better not to dump on your own doorstep and that an 'away match' might be a better idea. Luckily for the Klutes (cute bunny rabbit type aliens who wear fetching red jumpsuits) and the Furfurs (equally cute large helmeted Marvin the Martian type aliens) a solution is at hand.

Using their tele-transportation devices the little psychos shoot off to the planet they know as Terra, and that we know as, you've guessed it, Earth. Fortunately for us humans the Klutes and the Furfurs are ant sized and conduct their epic battles in gardens, shrubbery, toy-rooms and kitchens.

Dinosaur, Wooden Block, Racing Car, I'll take you all on



Tiny Troops, the new mini series release by Vulcan Software is one of the weirdest games I have ever seen, both in concept and appearance. It's like a mental amalgam of The Smurfs, Micro Machines, Chorlton and the Wheelies and Platoon. As combinations go, it's a bit of a weird one but as luck would have it it's a combination that makes for a strangely addictive and very enjoyable little game.

The statistics are pretty impressive; it's compatible with all Amigas, it's hard drive installable, it's got an excellent little animated introduction sequence, and as well as the fact that there are 65 different battle scenarios it has a two player option that always improves playability.

Although the large array of options can make playing the game seem pretty daunting at first, it doesn't take long to master the basics and start whopping the enemies' behinds.

Decisions

The first decision to be made is which of the pint-sized protagonists you want to command, the Klutes (bunnies) or the Furfurs (large helmets with deely boppers). Although both match each other in ability, my preference is for the Klute/bunny type things because they have bags more style and don't wear deely boppers.

After this you have to decide how many of these ant sized killers to take into battle. The Troop Selection screen presents you with a 'troop pool' - there are a total of 12 troops to command but, as the helpful little alien icon points out from the top of the



Get out Windy Miller, while you still can



We are the Klutes, we are the Klutes, we are, we are, we are the Klutes. Brighton Beach, Smurf sytle

screen, a smaller group of, perhaps five will be easier to command and much more manoeuvrable but the full 12 will have enough more firepower.

After deciding these little essentials you will be whisked away to do battle in what appears to be some unfortunate's well tended flower bed.

This is where the fun really begins. With your intrepid band of stupidly attired ant-sized rabbit-like aliens you will endeavour to seek out the enemy and destroy them. The troops can be moved either one by one or en-masse. This means you can use any strategy you like to waste the old deely boppers. Split into two or three groups and surround them, use one group to attack, and the other to defend your teleport base, or just go for the ever useful kamikaze death charge using every killer critter at your disposal.

In the heat of battle a number of cunning little features can be utilised to duff up the opposition. The Skull and Crossbones button will put the tiny troops into a mental Millwall fans after ten pints of strong lager type destruction rampage. Activate this and the troops will attack the enemy tele-transport base with everything they have.

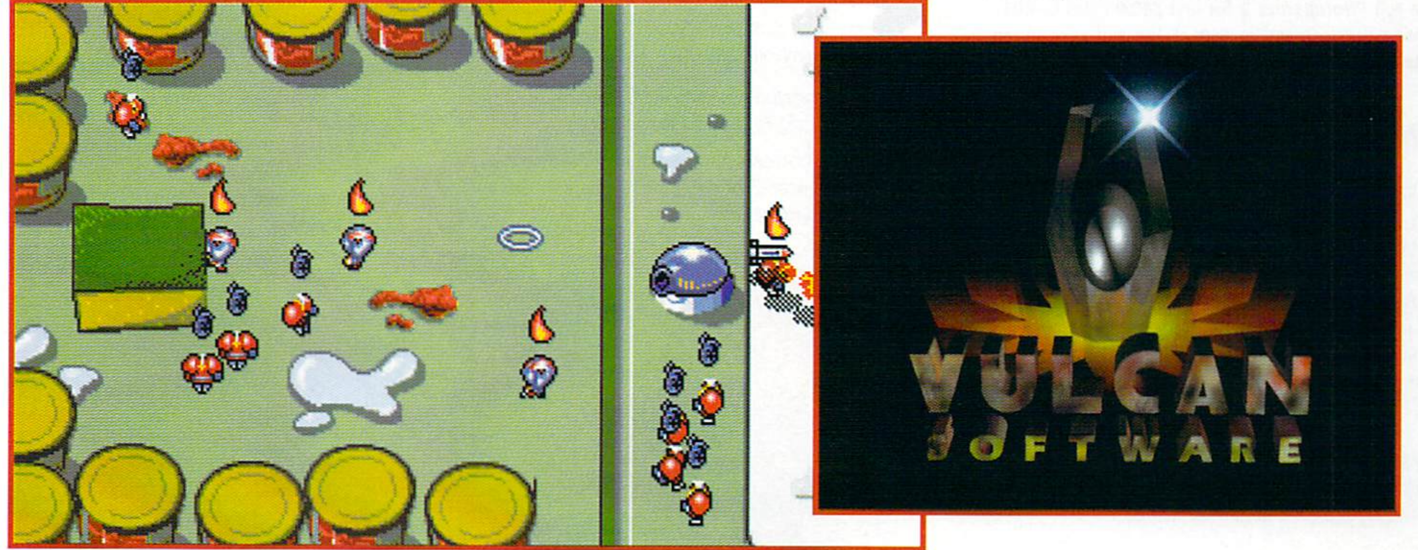
Another excellent little touch is the 'Call for Help' option. If one of the soldiers is wounded, his little mates will drop what they're doing and drag him away for repairs. The best of these features is the 'formation' option. By using the mouse to select any number of soldiers, you can select one of four different tactics to attack the enemy. The Wedge, Wall, Pincer and Decoy tactics all prove useful in your efforts to waste the little buggers.

Tiny Troops is a gem of a little game. Graphics wise it's nothing really to write home about, because it is basically a wargame strategy type game, and the overhead view is necessary to ensure that the situation on screen doesn't get to confused.

However, despite this it still looks excellent. Tiny Troops is presented as a tongue in cheek strategy game, and its appearance reflects this. Each battleground has a quite cutesy and cartoony feel about it, and the animations at the start and end of every battle will definitely bring a smile to your face. For instance if a battle is lost, one of the tiny troops will stand there looking dejected and forlorn, while his opponent stands opposite looking smug.

Playtime

Tiny Troops has oodles of playability and originality and effectively manages to turn a quite traditionally dull genre, the wargame, into something both fun and involving. The release date of Tiny Troops is set for December 1, so save some pennies and go waste some little critters. We'll bring you a full review soon.



Tired of the wanton destruction and carnage, Klutes and Furfurs have a foodfight instead

Photogenics

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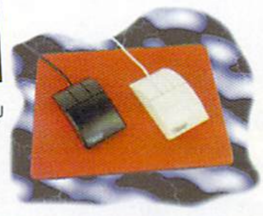
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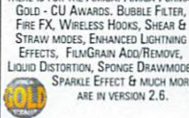
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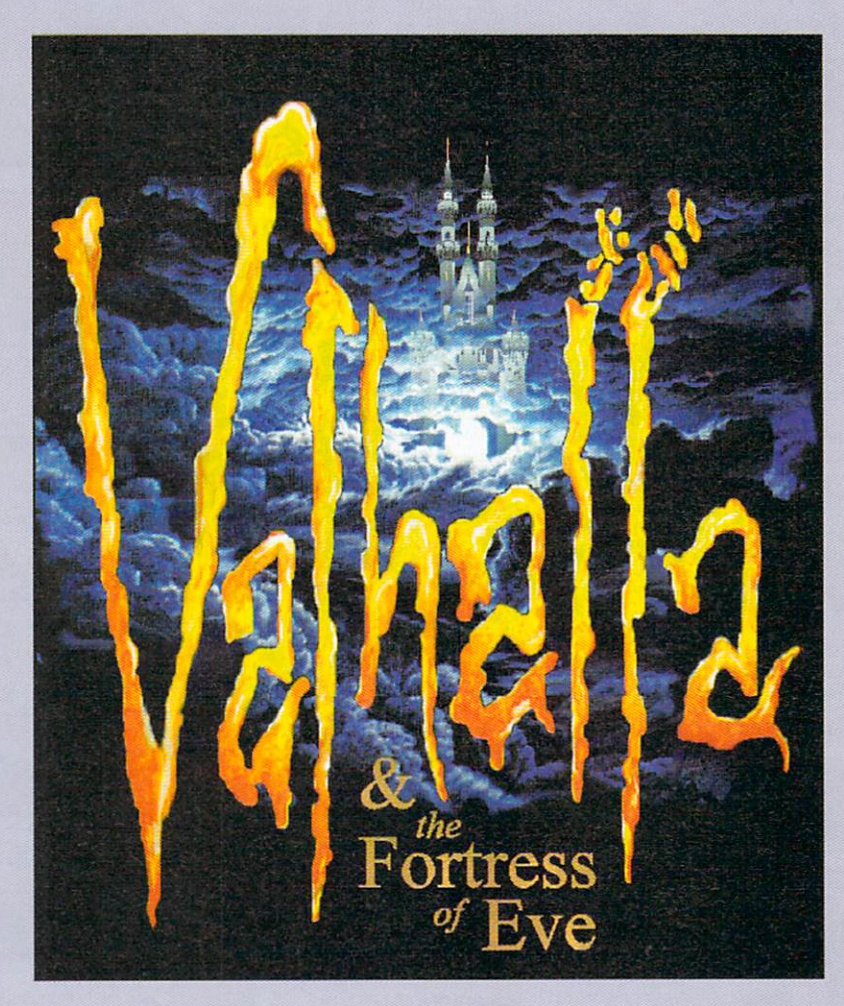




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In the first room, pick up the key, look under the dodgy floor tile and pick up the map. Go down and to the left and then pick up the gold coin. Go down as far as possible, then left and pick up the silver key. Then go right into a large room and pick up the Talisman of Life.

Now go up and find the door that the gold key opens. Pick up the gold key that you find in this room. Look around until you find a door that this new key opens, and look under the dodgy tile in the bottom right hand corner of the room to find another map.

Go back to the room where you found the Talisman of Life and flick the lever at the bottom. This opens the door next to the lever. Use the second map that was found to move around this room safely. Once in the room, pick up the chest key and the grey crystal from the stool. Then flick the lever at the bottom of the room before leaving.

Go up and to the right, and find that another door is now open. Enter the room, pick up the stick and look under the dodgy tile to find a gold ring. Put the gold coin in the wishing well and pick up the gem which is given in return.

Go back to the room where you started and place the gold ring on the Identity Stone. Pick up the parchment and read it. Take the parchment to the room of the first map and place it on the Altar of Justice. Now take the Symbol of Justice.

Leave the room and place the symbol next to the skull which asks "What is your quest?". The door next to this skull should now open. Enter the passageway, pick up the bottle of strength potion, the chest key and the crown at the right of the room. Flick the lever, then leave the room and go back the way you came.

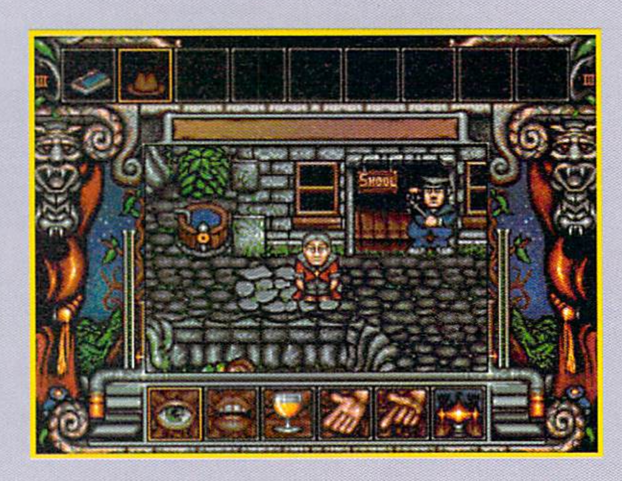
Go to the throne room and put the crown on the throne. Pick up the Warrior's Shield which you are then given and leave the room. Use one of the chest keys to open the chest in the room of the skull that wants wine, and take the withered rose.

Go to the room with the crowns and enter the passageway to the right. Place the gem on the stone thing which appears behind and it will disappear. Pick up the piece of wood and place the withered rose in the Water of Life, and retrieve the flower which magically appears.

Go back to the throne room and give the flower to the skull that says "Do you love me?". The door at the bottom right of this room should now open.

Now go to the room of the second map and use the chest key to open the chest which is there. Then pick up the bottle of Cold Protection and the chest key. Now go to the room below the one where the game began. Use the piece of wood in your inventory







to cross the chasm and open the chest with the key.

The next bit

Take the golden chalice and the gem and go to the throne room. Place the chalice on the drain underneath the tap and press the button next to the drain. The chalice should now fill up with water. Pick the chalice up again and then take it to the second map room and put the chalice on the Miracle Stone and the water turns into wine. Then go to the room of the skull who wants wine and give him the chalice. Take the Rubber Sole potion from the skull and then go to the Bloodstone room where the large boulder blocks the passage. Drink the strength potion and pick up the boulder, then enter the passageway. Now drink the Rubber Soles solution and walk left through the three electricity fields. Place the stick in the lever slot at the end of the passageway, then flick the lever to open the door.

Walk through this open doorway and take the Warrior's Sword from the tomb in the large room at the bottom of the passageway. Place the shield on the Warrior's Tomb and then the electricity fields will be magically demobilised.

Go back to the Bloodstone and place the sword on it, then pick it up again and give it to the skull who wants blood. A door to the left of the skull should now open. Go through this door, pick up the chest key and flick the lever. Now go through the newly opened door and pick up the gem. Use the chest key to open the chest in the large room and pick up the silver key and candle.

Use the silver key to open the door at the end of the electricity field passageway and enter the room. Give the Talisman of Light to the skull at the bottom left of the room and a door at the top of the room will open. Enter this room and pick up the credit card. Place the grey crystal on the Stone of Two Colours and pick it up when it has turned yellow.

Go to the Warrior's Tomb room and use the credit card on the PSB machine. A door should now open.

Go through the door, pick up the rock and the chest key. Place the Cold Protection potion on the place where the chest key was, and it should change into a Fire Protection potion. Go to the room of the Eye of the Beholder (above the electricity field passageway) and place a gem on the passageway blocker which appears behind you. Drink the Fire Protection potion and pick up the eye. Put the eye in the Water of Beauty and pick up the green crystal which appears, and that is how to complete the first part of the adventure, and hopefully next month, we'll have the next part of the solution.











Paul Overaa explains DOS library routines to combine file names and paths



File Name Building

Having dealt last month with the task of displaying an asl file requester it's time now to tackle the job of extracting filenames from the associated requester structure.

If the AslRequest() function returns TRUE then the rf_File and rf_Dir fields of this structure end up holding the name and directory details of the file selected by the user. These fields names, incidentally, are the Release 2 forms which were redefined with Workbench 3 as fr_File and fr_Drawer.

Although strictly speaking these latter names should now be used I've opted for the original terms so that those of you with the Release 2 includes will still be able to assemble the code.

Anyway, name changes aside, in order to use these strings (say to open and read a file) the file path and name obviously need to be combined and this isn't quite as easy as you might imagine. The difficulty is that, depending on which device and drawers are selected during asl requester use, the final name has to take proper account of possibly a device separator (:) and any directory separators (/) present in the strings.

The trick to an easy life in this department lies in using the DOS library's AddPart() function. Before explaining how this is used however, let's first look at the filename buffer arrangements that are going to be used in this month's example program. I'll be copying the rf_File and rf_Dir fields to a filename buffer that is defined, along with a label representing its size, like this:

```
filename  ds.b 256
filename_SIZEOF        EQU *-filename
```

With Devpac and most other assemblers the ds.b statements result in cleared memory being set aside and, although this filename buffer may be used many times (as the user selects further files), it's not actually necessary to clear it before adding new selections – providing we copy the trailing NULL byte of any new string added.

The 680x0 dbeq instruction is great for these types of loops and the fragment shown in listing 1 shows how the directory entry is placed in the filename buffer. It's at this stage in the proceedings that the AddPart() function becomes useful since it allows us to properly add the specified filename to the directory path information present in the filename buffer.

```
move.l  #filename_SIZEOF-2,d0
movea.l file_request_p,a0          ASL
requester address
movea.l rf_Dir(a0),a0 get start of directory
entry
lea         filename,a1  our filename buffer

.copy_loopmove.b  (a0)+,(a1)+
tst.b       (a0)  have we reached a NULL?
dbeq        d0,.copy_loop
move.b      (a0),(a1)   copy terminal NULL
```

Listing 1: New device/directory details can be copied into the filename buffer like this

AddPart() is very easy to use – you just load registers a0 and d1 with the addresses of the asl requester structure and filename buffer:

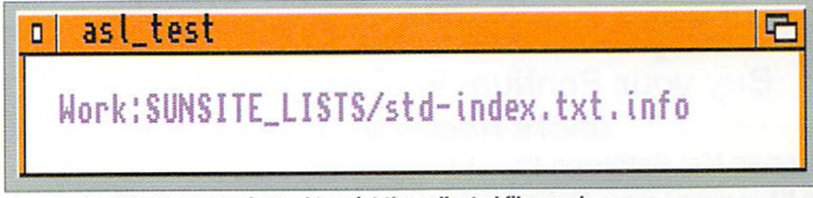
```
movea.l    file_request_p,a0  ASL requester
move.l     #filename,d1        filename buffer
```

specify the filename field to be added along with the size of the filename buffer:

```
move.l     rf_File(a0),d2        ASL filename
move.l     #filename_SIZEOF,d3   buffer size
```

and then finally call the AddPart() function to produce a complete path/filename string:

```
CALLSYS AddPart,_DOSBase
```



A static Intuitext structure is used to print the collected filename!

Some example code

With the use of the AddPart() function file path/name creation becomes easy but, since it's only possible to illustrate its use with the asl requester from an intuition-style environment, there is still a fair amount of code connected with this month's example.

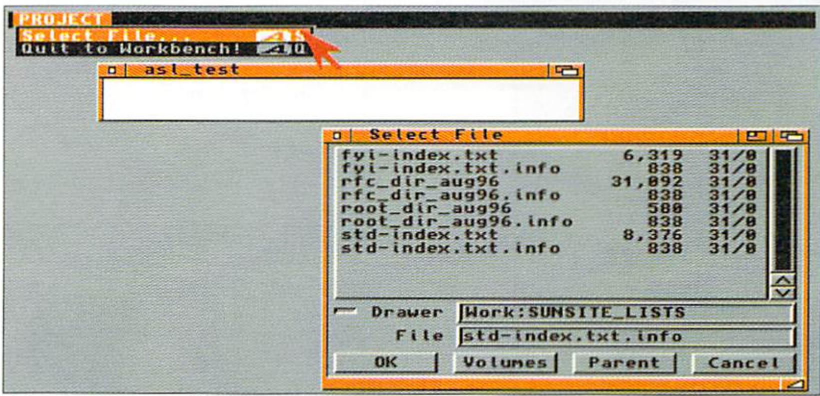
Not only is it necessary to open a window but some event handling code is also needed to recognise both when the asl requester should be placed on the screen, and when the program should terminate. I've gone for gadtool menu plus window close gadget event detection and so you'll see IDDCMP_MENUPICK and IDCMP_CLOSEWINDOW flags present in the window's WA_IDCMP tag entry.

The example opens a window in the Workbench screen and uses my standard error handling schemes for screen locking, menu and file requester creation and other resource allocation tasks. In short, as the various routines are successfully called they push addresses of their corresponding deallocation functions onto a specially assigned stack area. These routines are then called just before program closedown to make sure that everything gets properly deallocated or released.

As far as the code connected with asl requester use and filename creation I've tried to keep things as straightforward as possible. All the program does is display the combined file path/name selection in the window using the intuition library's PrintIText() function.

The IntuiText structure needed for this has been set up in the source using dc.x statements and you'll see when you examine the coverdisk code that RP_COMPLEMENT draw mode has been used (draw mode flags incidentally are specified in the graphics/rastport.i include file). The reason for this is that a PrintIText() call just before clearing the filename buffer then allows any previously displayed name to be cleared from the display.

You'll find both source and Workbench runable versions of the example program on the coverdisk along with an EasyBaseAC file containing details of the main library functions mentioned.



Bringing up the asl requester takes surprisingly little code



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Neil Mohr helps you get the best out of last month's Photogenics cover disk



Photogenics Tutorial part 1

Well I should hope you are chuffed to bits with last month's Photogenics cover disk, and if you missed it you can always get hold of a back issue. You are not only getting the Amiga's best 24-bit art program but also an extremely powerful image processing tool to boot. Hopefully over the coming months we will go from covering the basics of Photogenics to delving more fully into its powerful alpha channels and paint modes.

You should have already read the brief intro last month that outlined Photogenics' drawing tools and how to make use of the unique paint layer. So taking up from where I left off last month the paint layer is your friend.

In some ways it can be thought of as an infinite undo buffer, as you can paint onto it as much as you like without effecting the image *underneath*. You can paint on effects with the left button and then if you have overdone things remove them with the right. So if you are applying an effect to a specific area you can easily remove any excess *paint*.

Really the paint layer acts as an alpha channel between the image and the effect you are painting. Just as when using the paint mode you can apply semi-transparent colour to an image, when painting on an effect such as emboss, it can be applied with varying strengths. If you take a look at the zebra picture you should see how the yellow gradient corresponds to the gradually weakening emboss effect to the right.

This allows you to fade-in effects you may be using on a certain area of a picture. Now doing this directly with the effect can be tricky as many can have subtle results, too subtle to spot directly. So it is usually best to select the area you want to effect using the paint mode and when happy with what you have done switch to whichever effect you want to use before fixing the changes.

Tiny tips



Zoom - This tool not only allows you to zoom into an image by selecting which part to zoom into and then altering the area, but once you have zoomed in, if you now click the centre of the image and push the mouse up you can zoom back out without having to resort to the full zoom out button

Public screen - Just as all good programs should Photogenics runs on an Amiga public screen which means any other well behaved program can be run on Photogenics' screen. So if you have closed Workbench to save memory, you can still use ToolManger docks and any program launched by hot keys on the Photogenics screen

Multiple Images - With Photogenics it is not necessary to have an image window for every loaded image. If you have images loaded that are being used for the alpha and secondary channels using the 'hide/show window' menu option you can save memory by closing these unnecessary image windows. A thumbnail image will still be shown in the Thumbnail window so you can access it later



Smear - This can be a very powerful tool allowing you to merge edges of images together. However, you need to keep in mind that it works directly on the image bypassing the paint layer so any changes are permanent beyond the single undo that Photogenics provides. So as soon as you take your finger off the mouse button that's it

Mode selection

Thanks to the excellent way Photogenics displays loaded images the screen mode you pick is not quite so important. Normally with an Amiga paint package you have to take account of what is known as the aspect ratio of the image and the screen display, but as images in Photogenics are scalable you can overcome this problem.

Even so you are best off using a 1:1 ratio screen such as PAL:Hires Laced, DBLPAL:Hires No Flicker, Euro72:Productivity or Super72:Hires Laced as they give the best on screen representation. Personally I like Super72 as even though it is laced, it has such a high vertical refresh rate the flicker is hardly noticeable and you get a lovely 800x600 resolution screen.

Unfortunately, the AGA chipset running Photogenics in 256 colours on a monitor mode really slows down the screen and even the Ham8 preview does little to rectify this. So unless you own a graphics card you may be better off using one of the 16-colour preview modes.



16 colour previews are fast but crude, while Ham8 is quite blocky. The 256 colour preview mode picks out details the best

GETTING AROUND

Brushes
Image Window
Savers
Loaders
Tool Bar

Brush Settings
Trans. Ingredients
Thumbnail Window
Palette
Modes

So you know what I am referring to during the tutorials and so you at least have a rough idea of what every part of Photogenics is for, here is a quick tour around your basic Photogenics' screen.

Status bar - Instead of having your plain old Amiga title bar, in Photogenics additional information is shown in the title bar, such as the currently selected image, paint mode and brush. It is also possible to get the amount of remaining memory and the time displayed by Photogenics from the settings menu

ToolBar - Anyone who has used DPaint or Brilliance will recognise the various drawing tools available from Photogenics' ToolBar. Many of the icons can be clicked twice to alter the drawing mode or to allow you to change options for that tool, such as with the fill. The last button is the all important Fix, that makes any changes to the paint layer permanent

Image Window - Where your loaded images are displayed, it is fully scalable both horizontally and vertically allowing you to make a large image smaller to speed up drawing or larger for fine detail work

Brushes - Allows you to choose one of Photogenics' natural material brushes

Brush options - For each of Photogenics' brush types you can alter the size, pressure and transparency used when drawing. So using the airbrush if you want a constant solid line change the pressure to 100 percent

Palette - Selected either from the Windows menu or clicking on the select colour button at the top of the ToolBar, this allows you to choose one of 16.7 million colours to draw with. Using the window's zoom gadget a list of pre-set colours can be displayed

Paint modes - Over 50 different image processing and painting effects are available from Photogenics' Mode window, each one allows you to paint the effect onto the current image and most can be further altered from the options button

Thumbnail bar - For every image loaded a thumbnail of the image will be shown here. The main use is to allow you to drag and drop thumbnails to and from the alpha and secondary channel slots

Loader - All the currently available Photogenics' loaders are shown here, most have no extra options. There are however a number of special loaders that generate 'random' patterns such as streaks and ripples that do have extra options. A text loader allows you to import Amiga fonts as images

Savers - Any image format that Photogenics can use are shown here as well as letting you access specific options for each format, such as Jpeg compression levels. A few special savers allow images to be rendered in 24-bit on an Amiga HAM6/8 and CyberGraphX screen, or even printed out using either a standard Amiga print driver or Studioll

Trans. Gradients - Using one of the options from this window allows you to add a 24-bit gradient, going from full colour to fully transparent using any of Photogenics' fill tools

Phil South shows you how to make rainbows



Mommies little helper

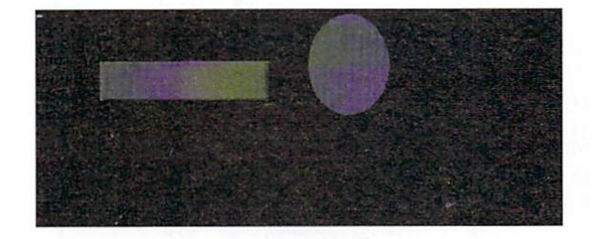


I know, I said I was going to do some more tricks with rainbows. I'm not going to, because I changed my mind when I discovered these two great programs which you really should get hold of if you don't have them already.

One of them is a really neat rainbow generator and the other a drawing program. It makes drawing user interfaces, of the kind we spoke about a few months ago, a real breeze. It allows you to draw on the screen and have those drawings turned into AMOS drawing commands. So the pictures are created by re-drawing them on the screen much the way you did, rather than you having laboriously to re-create your design by trial and (mostly) error.

Havoc Rainbows is a Rainbow coding tool which surpasses most of the ones you will have been used to. It's written in AMOS, but it is compiled. So no peeking at the code to steal its secrets this time.

It saves out the rainbows as RAIN files, which can then be loaded into AMOS and displayed with a player program, which is supplied as code which you can bolt into existing programs. The interface is very sparse, but you can very quickly build up rainbows for all kinds of applications.



You can add lines of colour and then blend between them using all the colours of the, well, rainbow I guess. Once you've made your rainbows you save them out as a RAIN file and voilà! That's a great program, but it's not as much fun as our next guest tonight.

Art attack

Art Coder by Steve Tiffany is another proposition entirely. The program has been stripped down to its bare essentials and posted to the Internet as an AMOS file, so you can see how it was done. It simplifies the use of the graphics commands Polygon, Polyline, Draw, Box Bar, Ellipse, Paint, Palette, Set Pattern and Text.

It works like a paint program, but instead of saving a picture as an IFF file, it writes an Ascii file in RAM that contains the code to re-create the drawing. You simply merge this code into your own program when you want the picture to draw to the screen.

You draw the picture using the tools – by the way, the keyboard equivalents should be familiar to users of Dpaint. Nice touch! Once you've done that, you quit from Art Coder, and then merge, using Shift-Left Amiga-M on AMOS Pro, and the code stored in the RAM: device can be loaded. (The file is automatically saved into RAM: when you quit out of the Art Coder.)

Once you've merged the picture you can run the program to check it looks okay, and then cut and paste this code into your program. Before merging the art code, you have to look at the information line at the top of the editor screen, where it says "Free-" followed by a number.

If the number is less than 20,000, you have to go to the Editor menu and select Set Text Buffer. Increase the number in the requester by at least 20,000 to make sure you can fit in all the text for your drawings.

If you forget to do this you can set it later when you notice that the merged code is truncated at a certain point! Oh yes, and you have to make sure that the screen dimensions are compatible in the target program. If the dimensions are wrong, the drawing will be either half off the screen or squashed into a corner.

For example, I drew the above picture with a bar and an ellipse. The bar is actually three bars, and they are nested together to make a bevelled box. Then I drew an ellipse in white and filled it with red. The code which Art Coder made for this drawing was:

```
Ink 0 : Paint 222, 190 : Ink 8 : Bar
82,63 To 280,104 : Ink 7
Bar 78,61 To 282,106 : Ink 9 : Bar 82,63
To 282,106 : Ink 8
Bar 82,63 To 278,104 : Ellipse
380,65,49,59 : Ink 4 : Paint 370, 76
```

Perfect. Now all I have to do to sweep the market in AMOS programs containing boxes and circles is to crank out Art Coder pictures and sell the programs! Fame at last.

Ahem. Seriously though, this is a very good program, and I like it a lot. What I would like to see in future revisions is a magnify mode – useful for those hard to see little places in a hires screen – and some other method of saving code rather than this old saving it to RAM malarkey. Other than that I insist you go and get a copy of this program at once. It's available via Aminet. Set your browser for http://wuarchive.wustl.edu/~aminet/ and go for it. Right that's me done, I'll see you next month with some more kicking AMOS routines.

Write stuff

If you have any other AMOS programs or queries about AMOS, please write to the usual address: Phil South, Amos Column, Amiga Computing, Media House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 4NP.

Please send routines on an Amiga disk with notes on how the program works on paper, not as text files on the disk. Make the routines short enough to appear in print, i.e. no more than about 30-40 lines of code, and if possible make them use no external graphics, or if they can't be used without them, be sure to provide them on the disk in native IFF format, and the same goes for sound files.



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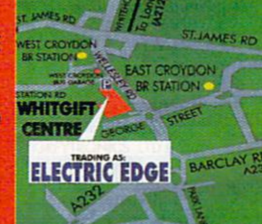
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Paul Overaa explains there are benefits to be had in the overall music scene



Salesman Sid strikes again!

Out of the blue a few weeks ago I received a call from a chap who, many years ago, I'd worked with in a band. His current band had spilt and he was forming a Midi-sequencer based duo for playing clubs. The two had invested in a MDF2 Midi file player, plus a couple of sound modules, and intended going out playing live using ready-made Midi file song arrangements.

Great idea but they hadn't realised that it would often be necessary to change song keys in order to handle the vocals – and this meant they needed a sequencer.

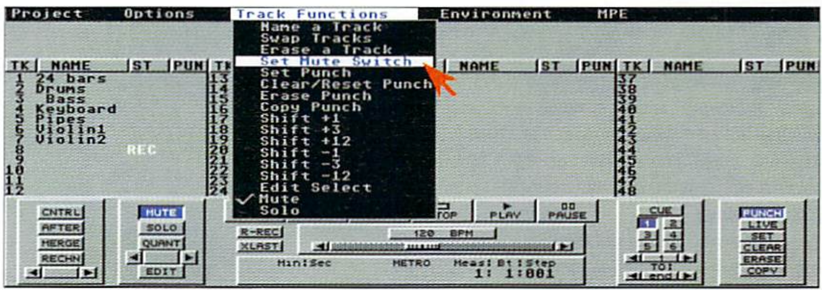
It turns out that the pair had gone into their local music store looking for something cheap and cheerful – and an assistant had immediately tried to flog them a Mac system costing almost two and a half grand. Then, as a cheap alternative, a Windows 95 based machine was suggested which, with Midi software (and needless to say the latest Cubase version 2.8 was recommended), was to be a cool £1,800!

Now I'm not going to knock either the Mac or PC systems, nor indeed Cubase because it's a brilliant sequencer. What I take exception to however, are salesmen who disregard completely the real needs of a customer. Buying a Cubase system to change the key of a few Midi files is a bit like buying an Exocet to knock a wall down!

To cut a long story short they came around one evening (bringing some of their Midi files) and I showed how these could be edited using a selection of Amiga sequencers.

Sure I explained about the on-going Commodore-AT-Viscorp troubles, and pointed out that all Amiga sequencers are archaic relative to PC/Mac offerings.

"But", said I, "a second hand Amiga running some sequencing software will do everything you need and, more to the point, you'll probably be able to pick up both for just a few hundred pounds."



For jobs like key transposition, and most other general editing, sequencers like Dr T's KCS are fine. And remember – despite KCS being archaic relative to PC packages like Steinberg's Cubase, such an Amiga-based set-up will cost but a fraction of the price!

Because of its easy-to-use Midi drum channel protection I suggested they opt for Dr T's KCS and, after hunting around for just a couple of weeks, they found a user selling an A1200 with KCS (plus various other pieces of Midi software, and a Midi interface), for less than the price of the Cubase software alone.

Although a little ironic that such bargains are a direct result of the current Amiga climate, this does of course also mean that for every user leaving the Amiga fold – chances are that another is joining!

And talking of KCS

While demonstrating various editing facilities I remembered a trick that might interest other users. Most people who use KCS tend to create arrangements using track mode and often end up with any number of tracks that in reality just represent one instrument.

You might, for example, lay down a bass line and then decide to embellish it. When you record the extra notes, KCS automatically puts them on to another track and if you do that sort of thing half a dozen times you'll end up with half a dozen fragmented bass line tracks. In addition to this you'll doubtless have a few tracks that you mute out (because they are not wanted at all).

I've found that the easiest way to clean up tracks like this is to write all the non-muted tracks into a sequence using the 'All Tracks to Seq' option, switch to song mode, insert the sequence number into the song segment list and then choose 'Song To All Tracks'.

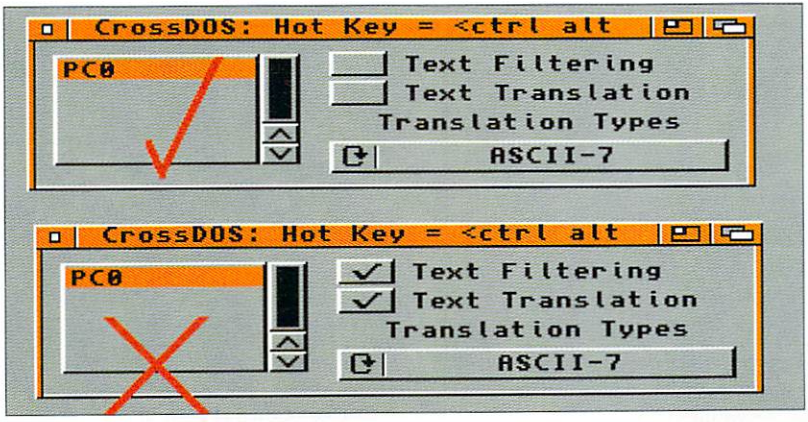
KCS will then write your sequence back into track mode storage but it does of course, only separate the data relating to each Midi channel in use. It takes about 10 seconds to do and the net effect is that KCS combines all those partial tracks leaving you with a set of tracks each of which contain just the data from one Midi channel!

Cross DOS capers

The other thing I was reminded of was CrossDOS and Midi file access. Almost all commercial Midi files come on MS-DOS formatted disks these days but, although CrossDOS is easy enough to use, every now and then stories of "well I tried it and it didn't work" crop up.

This particular difficulty is always due to the use of inappropriate CrossDOS filter settings. When you are copying text files, 'read me' files and so on, you need to have the text filtering (plus possibly the ASCII-7 text translation) checkbox of the CrossDOS control box ticked (ie active). The text filtering option filters carriage returns and end-of-file markers from MS-DOS files leaving just the Amiga required linefeed characters at the ends of text lines.

When reading or writing Midi files however it is absolutely essential to turn this text filtering option OFF. If you don't the file will be corrupted during transfer. Now the choice of settings may seem simple but what trips most users up is that they auto-run the CrossDOS utility on startup, hide the utility's control window, and then forget that the settings need to be changed according to the types of files being dealt with.



Don't forget to turn off text filtering when reading Midi files via CrossDOS

Paul Overaa explains local variables



Sticking to your locals

All experienced coders know the differences between global variables – those used in the main parts of a script – and local variables – created when a function definition uses the Procedure keyword. Newcomers however are often far less sure of the connections between these two types of entities.

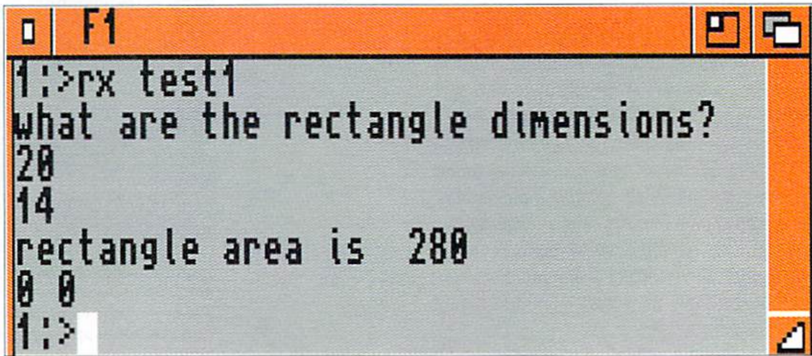
The best way to spell out the differences, and appreciate the potential dangers of globals, is with an example. Take a look at the script in Listing 1. It's a short example that collects some width and length information from the user and works out the area of the equivalent rectangle by calling a function that multiples the two values together.

OK, it's a long winded way of doing the obvious – just multiplying the two numbers together – but it's the results and principles that are important in this case. The point to notice is that, inside the function itself, I've deliberately included statements that set both the width and length variables to zero.

You'll find this script on the coverdisk and, if you run it using the RX command, you will see that the variables called *width* and *length* in the main part of the program also get set to zero. Why does it happen?

It's because the variables being used within the RectangleArea() function have all been set up by ARexx using a single symbol table and so the *width* and *length* names being used inside the function are exactly those variables defined in the main part of the script. In other words they are globals which remain in existence throughout the script's lifetime!

Now the fact that, in the main body of any script, all ARexx variables are global is neither here nor there. But with variables used inside functions serious problems can arise – because, as you've now seen, variables used outside of a function – in other parts of the program – can be inadvertently altered by operations involving similarly named variables present inside a function.



Typical output produced by the original version of the script

One solution – never use the same variable name twice – is not as feasible as it sounds as it is difficult to cross check variable names when dealing with larger scripts. It is also nigh-on impossible to avoid clashes when you use pieces of pre-written code – code copied from other programs or taken from a library of available function code fragments.

An instant remedy

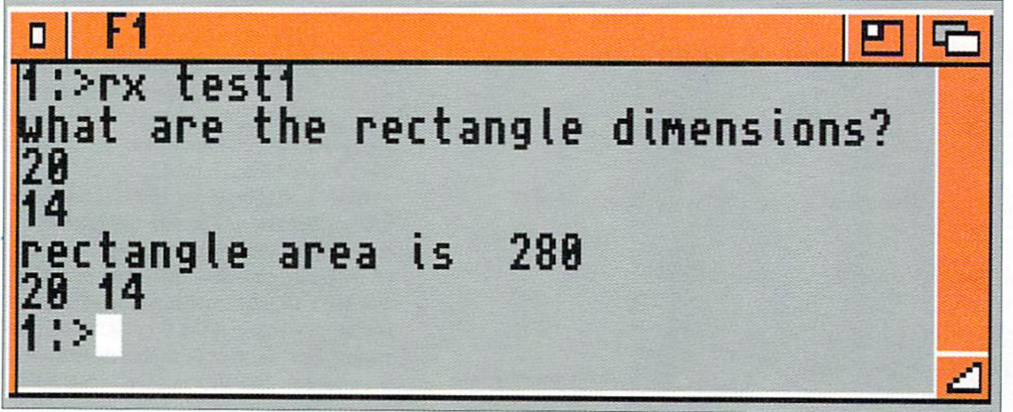
The solution lies in using the Procedure keyword after the function name. This forces ARexx to create a new symbol table for the function concerned and this in turn means that any variables used then become specific to that function (even if they are given the same names as variables being used elsewhere in the script).

These **local** variables, are in fact only physically created as the function is entered and, what's more, they can only be accessed from within the function itself and it's this that makes them inherently safer to use.

In the test1.rexx script you'll notice that I had placed a Procedure keyword into the code but enclosed it in /* */ markers in order to have it treated as a comment. If you remove the comment markers, and re-run the script, you'll be able to see exactly how the program behaves when local variables are used. The result is that *width* and *length* in the main part of the script then do NOT get altered and it's this level of protection that makes locals so appealing!

One last point that is also worth mentioning concerning the modified version of the script is this: The only difference between local variables such as *width* and *length*, which come into existence by virtue of an argument collection declarations (arg or parse arg), and those specified inside the function definition is that the former will be pre-initialised with a value provided when the function is called.

What in fact happens with the variables which come into existence via argument declarations is that when a function is used its arguments are copied into temporary – local – variable space and it is these copies that the function actually gets to manipulate!



The modified script containing the procedure statement eliminates what would otherwise be a dangerous area as far as variable names are concerned

```
/* test1.rexx */
/* this example deliberately alters the values of the width and
length variables from WITHIN the function - it also displays
the new values so that you can see what has happened... */
say 'what are the rectangle dimensions?'
pull width,length
say 'rectangle area is '
RectangleArea(width,length)
say width length
exit /* logical end of program */
RectangleArea: /* Procedure */
arg width, length
product=width*length
width=0;length=0  /* clobber these variables */
return product
```

Listing 1: This script deliberately damages the contents of some globals!

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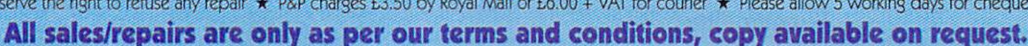
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Dave Cusick was wrong, and he admits it...



YAM gonna mail me?

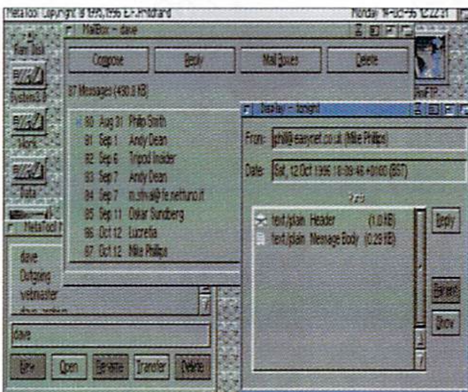
In the past I've moaned about the fact that the rather splendid Yet Another Mailer (or YAM to its many friends) could not be used by everyone because it relies on an inbuilt POP3 mail receiving method.

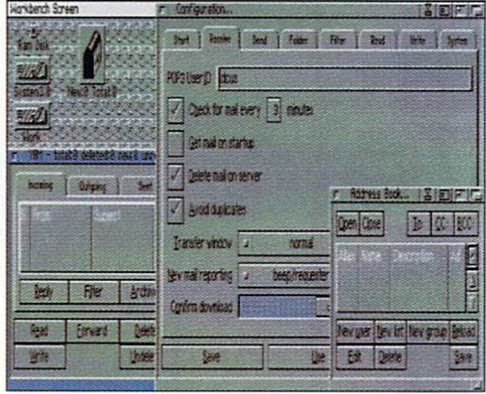
If, like me, you have an Internet account with a company who don't offer POP3 mailbox access, you may well have opted for an e-mail client such as Metatool, which relies on other little programs to handle the mail sending and receiving. However, Steve Tumbridge (steve@career.demon.co.uk) recently sent me an e-mail explaining that it is a relatively simple task to get YAM to work with SMTP mail. I thought I'd share the solution here, for the benefit of other users of SMTP-only services such as Demon. So over to Steve: "I too had the problem with YAM and SMTP when I moved my Cityscape account to Demon i.e. POP3 mail to SMTP. I sent an e-Mail to Marcel Beck and he kindly sent me a script written by Dhomas Trenn (dhomas@youngmonkey.ca) which converts SMTP mail into a format YAM understands, and it works very well. I have attached the script for you to look at.

"You can always use the import option in YAM, but I find the following method works really well for me. I use Sabot (available from Aminet) to monitor the size of my mail file. A normal icon appears on the screen showing an empty mail tray. When mail comes in, the file increases in size, Sabot recognises this and changes the icon to a mail tray with mail in it.

"One of the beauties of Sabot is that you can double click the icon and automatically run a script of your choice. So, I run a short script (also attached) which firstly deletes the .index file in the YAM/INCOMING directory discovered that this was necessary for the script to work) then backs up the incoming mail file (two generations) for safety reasons. The final copy instruction just sets the mail file back to zero again). Next it runs Dhomas's script to convert the new mail, and finally YAM to display all the new e-mails."

Many thanks both to Steve for the advice and the MoveMail script, and to Dhomas for writing the original ElmToYam script, both of which are reproduced below. You'll need to alter the mailbox names and so on, but once you've done that you should be able to use YAM, which is arguably the best e-mail client available for the Amiga.


Metatool may be excellent...


...but YAM 1.3 is even better

Gonna Get myself Konnected

Remember that a couple of issues ago I previewed a freeware Internet front end called Konnection which promised an enormous range of features, a memory-saving modular approach, and an attractive GUI. Well, it's still in development but it's nearing completion, so in next month's Comms column I'll be taking a detailed look at some of its more powerful features and comparing it with the opposition.

```
MoveMail script:

delete yam:incoming/.index
rx mailtoyam.rexx uumail:steve Miami:yam/incoming
copy uumail:steve.bak1 uumail:steve.bak2
copy uumail:steve uumail:steve.bak1
copy uumail:steve.restore uumail:steve
yam:yam

ElmToYam script:
/*
 ELMtoYAM.rexx $VER: 06 Mar 1996
 Author: dhomas trenn / young monkey studios (c) 1996
 EMail: dhomas@youngmonkey.ca
 Converts ELM style incoming mail file into YAM style
 files. Preserves OLD/READ/ANSWERED/NEW attributes
 contained in the X-Status: header. Presently, it will not
 convert ELM ARCHIVE mail files (such as SENT).

 SYNTAX: RX ELMtoYAM
 EX: RX ELMtoYAM UUMAIL:dhomas RAM:
 RX ELMtoYAM UUMAIL:dhomas YAM:incoming
*/

parse arg MailFile OutDir .
if right(OutDir, 1) ~= ":" then OutDir = OutDir"/"
call open('MailFile', MailFile, 'R')
call open('TempFile', "T:ELMtoYAM.temp", 'W')
line = readln('MailFile')
parse var line x x x cD cM cY .
nMessages = 0
XStatus = ""
do forever
 line = readln('MailFile')
 select
 when (left(line, 5) = "From ") | eof('MailFile') then do
   select
      when cM = "Jan" then cM = "01"
      when cM = "Feb" then cM = "02"
      when cM = "Mar" then cM = "03"
      when cM = "Apr" then cM = "04"
      when cM = "May" then cM = "05"
      when cM = "Jun" then cM = "06"
      when cM = "Jul" then cM = "07"
      when cM = "Aug" then cM = "08"
      when cM = "Sep" then cM = "09"
      when cM = "Oct" then cM = "10"
      when cM = "Nov" then cM = "11"
      when cM = "Dec" then cM = "12"
      otherwise cM = "01"

    cD = right(cD, 2, "0")
    if length(cY) = 2 then cY = 19''cY
    cDate = right(date('i', cY''cM''cD, 's'), 5, "0")
    /* Rename as message */
    call close('TempFile')
    n = 1
    do forever
      if ~exists(OutDir''cDate"."n) then leave
      n = n + 1
    end
    address command 'copy T:ELMtoYAM.temp 'OutDir''cDate"."n
    if index(XStatus, "A") ~= 0 then
      address command 'filenote 'OutDir''cDate"."n "R"
    else if index(XStatus, "R") ~= 0 then
      address command 'filenote 'OutDir''cDate"."n "O"
    call open('TempFile', "T:ELMtoYAM.temp", 'W')
    parse var line x x x cD cM cY .
    nMessages = nMessages + 1
    if eof('MailFile') then leave
    XStatus = ""
    end
  when left(line, 9) = "X-Status:" then
    parse var line x XStatus .
  otherwise
    call writeln('TempFile', line)
 end
end
call close('TempFile')
call close('MailFile')
say nMessages" messages found."
```

Contact

If you wish to contact me, my e-mail address is dave@dcus.demon.co.uk. Questions, suggestions and feedback are all more than welcome. I also have a homepage, which is now at http://www.dcus.demon.co.uk/.

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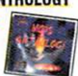
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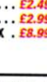
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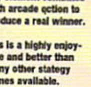
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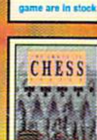


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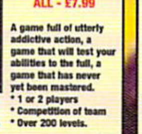
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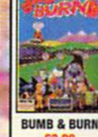

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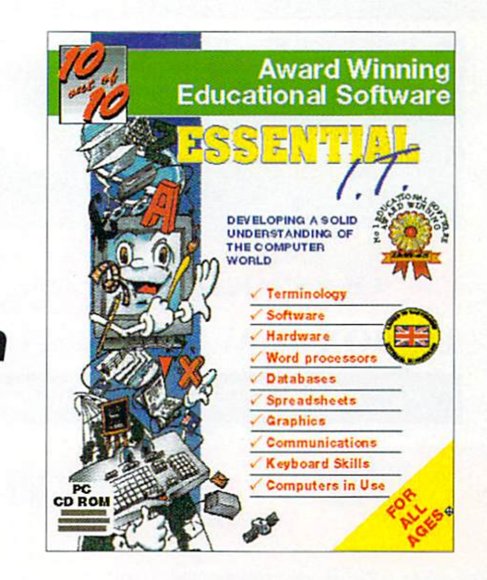


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Neil Mohr teaches you how to sing-a-long an assign script



Setting software scripts

Nowadays you rightly expect that any program, utility and even games should be easily installed on your hard drive. Thanks to the standard Amiga installer this has been made a simple task, taking care of copying programs and their data files.

For many older utilities and games the lack of an installation script can put off many people from trying to install the program, or alternatively if it has additional fonts and library files you may not be too keen copying them over your hard drive. But with a little knowledge of Amiga scripts and a couple of important AmigaDOS commands, getting these programs up and running will be a doddle.

The biggest problem with these older programs is that they are expecting to be run off a floppy disk, so at some point when you run the program the annoying *Please insert blar disk* will appear. But of course we do not want it to use the floppy disk but the files on your hard drive.

By way of a real life example, I will pick the game Silent Service II by Microprose. This does come with an install program as do virtually all Microprose games but it is a good example to use anyway.

First off you need to get all the files copied across and the best way is to make a new directory on your hard drive – call it **SSII**. Put in the first disk, double click on the disk icon and select show all files from the Workbench menu.

Now select all the files, use the right-Amiga a key short cut and drag all the files over to the new directory. For the second disk copy all the files to this new directory. The same process will go for any other program as well, just copy all the files from all the disks into a single directory.

Once this is all done you need to make what is known as a script to set everything up so the program will run. To do this you need to use a text editor. Every Amiga comes with a fairly poor editor called Ed but the excellent CygnusEd was on our November 95 cover disk.

If you are using Ed open a shell and type **Ed ram:Start** then enter the following into the Ed window. Once done click the close gadget and press 'Y'.

```
Assign silenta: ""
Assign silentb: ""
Assign fonts: fonts add
game
```

The first two lines will make the game, instead of using the two original disks, look for any files in the current directory, the one the script is run from. The third line will add the fonts directory that was copied from disk 1 to the SSII directory to the system font directory list that is scanned when the game looks for its fonts. The final line actually runs the game.

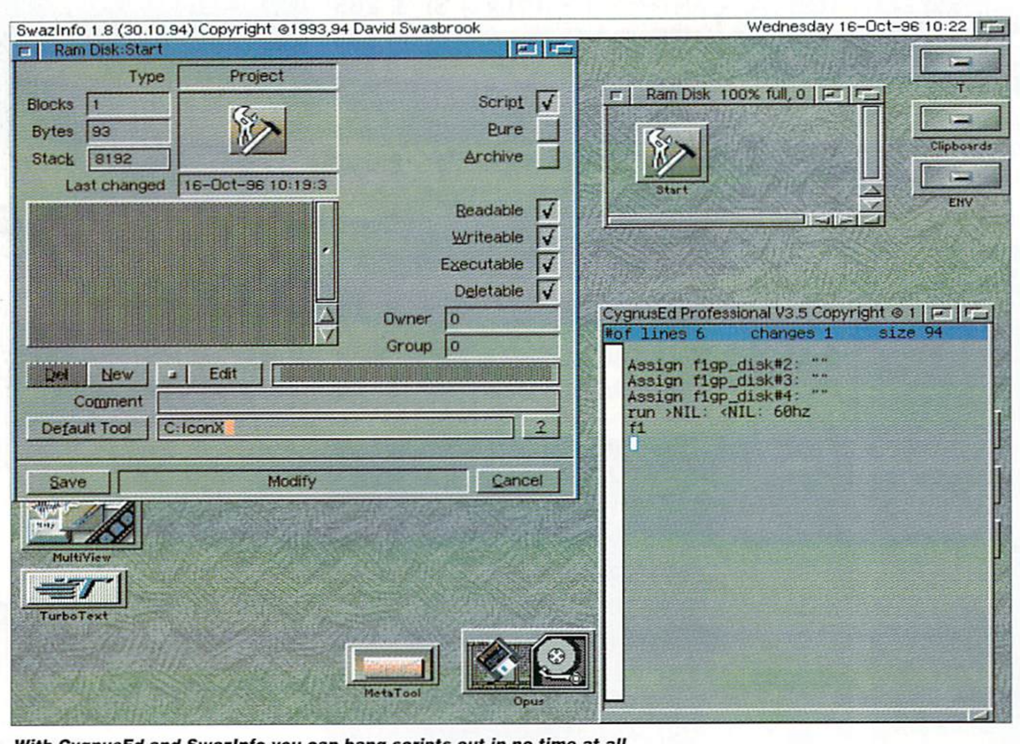
If a program has additional libraries the same thing can be done saving you the hassle and the extra files from your already bulging libs drawer. If this is the case normally the program will have these library files in a libs drawer on the first disk, so they should be copied across with the drawer to the new directory. So to add this drawer to the system libraries assign use **Assign libs: libs ADD**.

You should now have a file in RAM called Start but before you can use it to run Silent Service it needs an icon adding to it. To do this run IconEdit, found on the Extras disk that came with the Amiga, open up the Ram disk, drop the existing Start icon into the IconEdit window and select save. The final thing you need to do is pop up the Icon's information requester and change the default tool to **C:IconX**. You can now drag the Start script into the Silent Service drawer and double click it to run the game.

If you have SwazInfo this job is made even more straightforward, as all you need to do is pop the Start icon information requester up and drop an icon file into the requester and change the tool type to **C:IconX**.

So the basic steps are copy all the files from each disk into a single directory on your hard drive. In the script for each disk put **Assign disk-name: ""**. If there are fonts or extra libraries on the first disk add the extra system assigns **Assign fonts: fonts add** and **Assign libs: libs add** to make sure the program will find them. Finally add the name of the program so it will be run automatically from the script. Another example is this script for Formula 1 Grand Prix

```
Assign f1gp_disk#2: ""
Assign f1gp_disk#3: ""
Assign f1gp_disk#4: ""
f1
```



With CygnusEd and SwazInfo you can bang scripts out in no time at all

Assign subtleties

In normal use the assign commands only usually takes two inputs the assign name and the path of the target drawer, but there are a number of extra switches that add to its functionality.

ADD - Add another directory search path, to an existing assign
REMOVE - Remove an existing assign from system list
DISMOUNT - Remove an existing mounted drive, such as CD0
DEFER - Do not add assign to system list until it is called